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Mary, Queen of the Apostles

by

Very Rev. James Alberione, S.S.P., S.T.D.

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A Daughter of St. Paul



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MARY, QUEEN OF THE APOSTLES



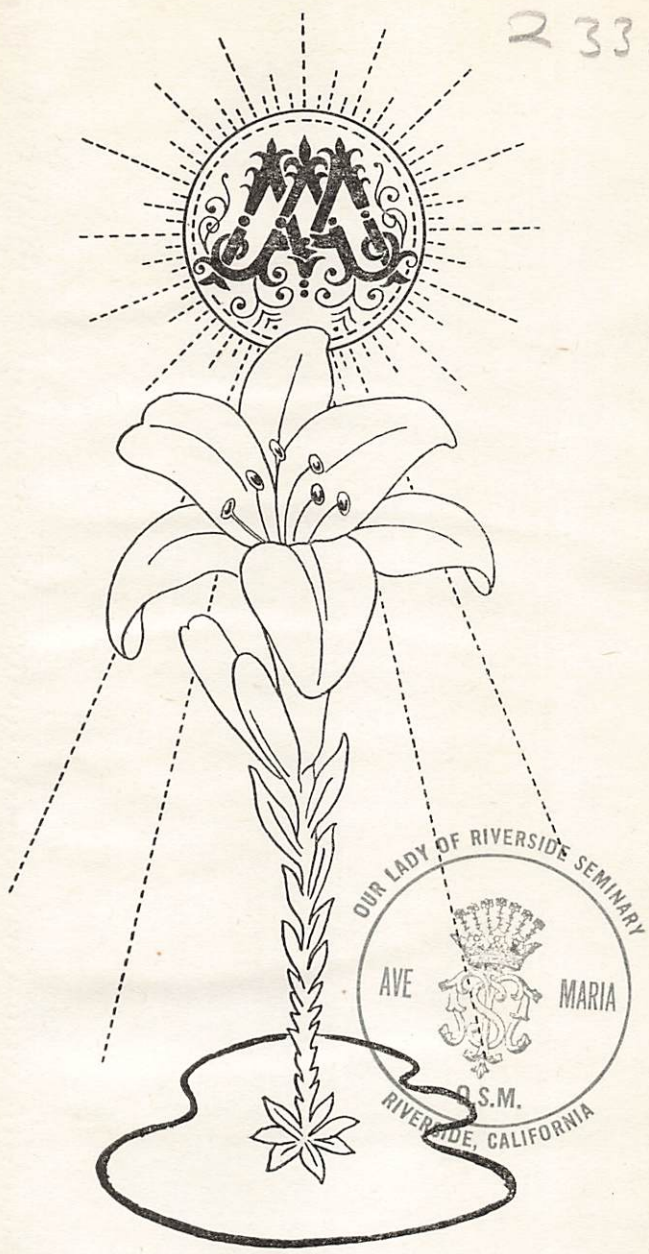
Queen of Apostles, pray for us.

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INTRODUCTION

Make apostles and give them as their leader Mary: Apostle and Queen.

Lucifer let his angels loose in the world and they enlisted the imprudent and perverse in their army of evil for the eternal ruin of souls. Today they employ especially the press, the radio, the screen and other modern means. Catholic readers, try having a map of the world in your home, besides the Gospel, the Crucifix and the image of the Blessed Mother. With red ink check the regions where Christianity prevails; with black ink indicate where Christianity is a minority. Encircle the regions where Catholicism predominates and where schismatics or heretics of the various sects abound. Then mark those regions where the Catholic life is lived in the laws, institutions, schools and social relations; and note where we have the pitiable spectacle of "baptized Catholics who live a paganized life" without the real practice of their Faith in public or in private. . . .

Try it! It is a distressing but realistic picture. May this evidence awaken every soul. Here is a subject for deep thought:

RELIGIONS IN THE WORLD

Catholics 460,000,000

Protestants 250,000,000

Schismatics and Oriental Sects 180,000,000

Hebrews 12,000,000

Mohammedans 420,000,000

Religions of Oriental Asia 650,000,000

Hindus (Bramans) 320,000,000

Pagans and those without a religion 130,000,000

Just about one fifth of mankind enjoys the benefits of the Redemption and of the Catholic Church! Let us think of the other four fifths! The Son of God "for mankind and our salvation came down from Heaven, was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary and became man; was crucified; died on the cross...". And we, what are we doing for our brethren? Some do nothing; others propagate errors, vices, irreligion, thus working for the ruin of their brethren's souls. Let us consider Jesus' command: "Go teach all nations, preach and baptize".

Let them arise from their indifference: "And God gave to everyone of them a commandment concerning his neighbor". (Eccl. 17: 12.) Life today, more than ever before, is a battle. And all are called, because they have received Confirmation, to be soldiers of the Faith: "All the faithful for all the infidels". "All the fervent for all the indifferent". "All the Catholics for all the non-Catholics".

Jesus Christ is Head of the Elect. He sends His Angels, selects His Apostles, inspires generous souls, army of the Faith and of love.

Faith! Jesus Christ is more powerful than the devil.

Faith! We have powerful means: prayer, example, the spoken word, the press, the screen, television....

Faith! A Queen who overcame all heresies guides us; a Queen who defeated powerful armies, a Queen who precedes and comforts, a Queen who wins and saves, a Queen who was given a perpetual mission by God: She will crush the head of the deceiving serpent.

"Give us back our Blessed Mother!..." Such was a non-Catholic's cry. Upon entering his church he had felt the desolate emptiness of his sect and had cried: "Give us back our Blessed Mother!"

May Catholics make this invocation theirs? They may, at least in part, although in another sense. In fact, the vital Marian spirit is necessary, the real spirit of humility, of supernaturalness, of love, of confidence—which form the Christian. Interior life, which renders all the activity and apostolate of the Christian fruitful, is necessary.

Our responsibility is great because we have an easy and certain way of bringing Christ to the world: pass through this way: Mary.

Who goes to Mary will find Jesus.

Let us go to God through Mary. Let us advance to holy conquests, under the banner of Mary Mother, Teacher and Queen of the Apostles.

THE AUTHOR

CHAPTER I

MARY IS THE APOSTLE: PRINCIPLES

The **first** apostolate is that of interior life. It is necessary and indispensable; obligatory for all. He who works for his own purification and for his own sanctification, works for everyone. Each debt or defect removed renders the Church more glorious; each new virtue acquired gives her a new splendor before the Father.

From Heaven the Father can say of the Catholic Church as of Jesus Christ: "This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased: listen to Him".

No being, after the august Trinity, is so vital and operative as the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, the Church.

The **second** apostolate: suffering, which accomplishes, in regard to each one in particular that which is missing; that is, the application of the Passion.

The **third** apostolate is that of example. Virtues render the teachings of the Church believable to everyone, as do miracles; they make the Christian life amiable; they irradiate the grace of the heart.

After these come the apostolate of the spoken and the written word; the apostolate of the missions, of youth, of schools, and so on.

*

God willed that Mary should take part in the entire apostolate of Jesus, during both His terrestrial and His celestial life.

Mary participates in all the Eucharistic apostolate of the Divine Master. In the Mass, in Communion, in the Visits: we always find Jesus, the Son of Mary, there present. The application of Jesus Christ's merits, from Calvary down to the end of the centuries, is made by Mary. In the Crib, in the temple of Jerusalem, at Cana, Mary is always present. Jesus is Master by His sanctity at Bethlehem, in Egypt, in Nazareth, but in the exercise of virtue, Mary is His companion. Usually she followed Jesus when He preached; she participated in His sorrowful end on Calvary; in her Heart and on her arms she carried the growing Church which today she defends, comforts and vivifies. Mary was born and lives and is what she is: to save.

In fact, Jesus Christ accomplished and is accomplishing all with Mary. We cannot reach the union with Mary and dependence on Mary which was verified in Jesus Christ; but the closer we shall

get to her, the more beautiful and numerous will the fruits be. Let the apostolate be made through Mary, with Mary and in Mary.

O Mary, you are indebted to us for your grace, since God, seeing us so wretched, made you rich and merciful for us. You found so much grace, but for us. Help! Help, O Mother! The more mercy you exercise and the greater number of souls you save, the more glorious is your triumph and the more praise and gratitude will you receive from your numerous and saintly children, your crown and your joy. Make me worthy of praising you; but glorify yourself by magnifying your mercy.

“Among the divine things, the most divine is to cooperate with God for the salvation of souls” (St. Dionysius Areopagite). Now, Mary’s apostolate is different from that of Jesus, but it has the same extension.



Mary is the Mother of Jesus and Mother of the Church. She became the Mother of Jesus at the Incarnation, at the Annunciation; she became the Mother of the Church during the Passion, at Jesus Christ’s announcement: “Behold thy Mother”. She has towards the Church, which is the Mystical Christ, the care and duties proportionate to those which she had for the physical Christ.

*

Mary's apostolate is unique. In the Old Testament Mary was awaited as the bearer of the Savior. During her earthly life up to the Ascension of Jesus; then from the Ascension to her blessed Assumption; and now from Heaven until the end of time: she always gives Jesus.

Mary: the Mother of God, the Coredemptrix, the Apostle, the Mediatrix! These are aspects, modes, different phases in which the Blessed Virgin is considered in relation to her work. In the terrestrial paradise God announces her as the Coredemptrix because she will be the Mother of God. She is an Apostle because she is the Mother of God; she is Mother of God to be an Apostle. She is awaited as an Apostle: "...bear a son", (Isa. 7:14.) the Redeemer. She becomes Mother, but the consent to the Angel and the Incarnation constitute her Mother, Apostle, Coredemptrix, Mediatrix at one and the same time. In the life of Jesus she always appears as Apostle and Mother. She is the Mediatrix because she is the Mother of God, and continues the apostolate of giving Jesus to the world.

*

The celestial apostolate continues the earthly one; life is not destroyed but changed by death. Peter and Paul are always invoked to protect the

Church; from Heaven they continue the same mission they had in life; the only change is in the method; "Life is changed, not taken away". From Heaven, Mary continues for all times and in all places, to give Christ to individual souls and to mankind in general, just as she presented Him to St. Joseph, to the shepherds and to the Magi.

*

All Christians are bound to exercise the apostolate in some way or another. It is necessary. Every soul that lives in the state of grace exercises the apostolate for the Communion of Saints. Every healthy member contributes to the health and well-being of everyone in some measure during life and in eternity. The Church is a society, but a supernatural one made up of all the Saints: Christ, Mary, the blessed of Heaven, the souls in Purgatory, the members on this earth. There is but one Head: Christ; there is but one Neck: Mary, and many members: only one Blood circulates in all: the Blood of the Redeemer. There is but one life: grace. Every man who is in the state of grace contributes to the vitality of the society of the Church.

*

Too many thoughts and efforts are wasted; too many words and desires are inefficacious; too many methods and remedies are useless.

Everything, instead, is had in Jesus Christ and in Mary.

In Christ: to the Church many and zealous Priests; there are one million six hundred thousand Priests lacking, in order to have one Priest for every two thousand Catholics.

In Mary: Mary has the part of a Mother in respect to her Son in the formation and in the Catholic and sacerdotal apostolate.

*

Mary is the Apostle: after Christ and with Christ. God continues to give all graces through Mary, just as He willed that Christ should come to us through Mary: "Born of a woman". Each child receives his life from his mother, although the beginning of life is God. There is no child without a mother; there is no salvation without Mary. Every apostolate and every true apostle has life and action from Mary. So it was of the first Apostle: Christ. "We have our Apostle and High Priest: Christ."

Thus Christ began His apostolate through Mary at Cana; the apostolate of the Apostles was begun through Mary in the Cenacle; and likewise through the centuries all apostolates have had their beginning and energy from Mary. Without God nothing exists; without Mary nothing in Christ and in the Church.



Mary is the "Queen of Apostles" for three reasons: She has and accomplishes all that which all the Apostles together have accomplished, accomplish and will accomplish. Moreover, she has and is accomplishing an apostolate which exceeds and surpasses all the apostolates put together. Furthermore, she has and is accomplishing the duty of forming, guiding, sustaining, giving fruit and compensation to all the apostolates.

From the first instant of the Incarnation, from Mary's womb, through Jesus Christ, with Mary and for Mary, began the glorification and praise of God which forms the first and perfect apostolate; there also, began that Redemption which forms the second apostolate.

A fuller understanding is being sketched of Mary in her quality of Apostle, of Mother, Teacher and Queen of Apostles.



The apostle, the preacher, the missionary, the writer, the person of action must passionately love Mary whom Pope St. Pius X called the "Virgin Priest", and whose dignity surpasses that of the Priests and of the Popes. Mary is a Priest but in a different and more admirable sense than ours. Mary

prepared the Host and the Priest, and was the first to offer that bloody sacrifice which we renew in an unbloody manner.

St. Gertrude the Great once heard the Blessed Virgin say: "My most beloved Jesus should not be called my only Son, but my First-born Son. It is true, I conceived Him first in my womb; but after Him I conceived everyone of you by adopting you in the bosom of my maternal charity, so that you might be brothers of Jesus Christ and my children."

St. Augustine says: "All the predestined in the world are hidden in the bosom of the Blessed Virgin, where they are kept, nourished, protected and made great by this good Mother, until she will generate them to the eternal glory after death."

To exclude Mary from the apostolate would be to ignore one of the most essential parts of God's plan of redemption; it would be to deprive ourselves of the omnipotent supplication of Mary; it would be ignoring what Bossuet said: "Having once given Jesus Christ through Mary, God does not change His method, style or design. Mary generated the Head; Mary generates the members."

The apostle, the preacher, the missionary, the Confessor, the man of action, run the grave risk of constructing on sand, if their activity is not supported by an intense devotion to and faith in Mary.

Every apostolate is an effusion of the Holy Spirit on the souls and on the world. Well then, through the consent given by Mary to the Archangel, the Holy Spirit descended upon her and worked the greatest prodigy: the Incarnation and the sanctification of the Christ. From that moment on, Mary acquired a kind of jurisdiction over the temporal mission of the Holy Spirit. Thus there is no creature who receives grace, if not through Mary. Therefore, on Pentecost the Holy Spirit descended after being invoked by Mary who was leading the prayers.

*

“No one has ever been saved except through your intercession, O Mary, Mother of God. No one receives the gift of God if not through you, O Full of grace” (St. Germain).

Behold the way indicated to the apostle: if he is devoted to Mary, he becomes powerful in asking the effusion of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Mary gives her sons all they ask: “Children, this is my greatest trust; this is all the reason for my hope” (St. Bernard).

*

A work prospers and bears fruit only if it is born as Jesus: of Mary; if it is nourished by Mary; if it is accompanied by Mary: in joys, in trials

and in development. And if it prospers and bears durable fruits, it is evident that the way kept by Christ was followed: Mary, since it is always a generation, a birth and a life of Jesus Christ: "Until Christ is formed in you".

Take the way: Christ, Who passed through Mary, gives us a certain right to judge that a work is not lost nor to be despaired of, no matter what it is, if it was begun with Mary and continued with her. Mary is at the beginning and on the way of everything which concerns the Kingdom of God by means of Jesus Christ.

That which is almost unique in the history of Founders happened to Canon Allamano, founder of the Missionaries of the Consolata; but it is verified in the Founder of the Church, Jesus Christ. One day the Canon went to read his book of Rules to the first disciples gathered by him in the Institute he had founded. There was no one! All had left. He went through the whole house: he ascertained the disorder left by the fugitives. Then he went out, closed the door, and with a heavy heart went to the Church of the Consolata. There he prayed to the Blessed Virgin with whom he had begun, renewed his intentions and arose comforted. He began again, better than before, by Mary, with Mary, for Mary, in Mary. His work prospered, bringing abundant fruit in the Church of God.

CHAPTER II

MARY'S VOCATION TO THE APOSTOLATE

We can consider three orders in the apostolate:

1) Jesus Christ, God and Man, is the Apostle by nature: "Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Jesus". (Heb. 3: 1.)

2) Mary is co-apostle by mission or election; apostle for Christ. Thus as is said, Jesus—Redeemer and Mary—Coredemptrix.

3) All the others are apostles by participation or vocation.

Jesus Christ is the Apostle of the Father. Jesus Christ is the One sent by the Father to promote the glory of God and the peace of men. Jesus Christ founded the apostolate.

In His turn Jesus instituted apostles of His own: "He elected twelve whom He called apostles". "Through Whom we have received the grace of apostleship to bring about obedience to faith among all the nations". (Rom. 1: 5.)

Our apostolate is an emanation of Jesus Christ. It is the giving of Jesus Christ: Way, Truth and Life, to the whole world.

Mary participates in this apostolate more than all the Doctors, Preachers and Missionaries.

She is the Apostle and Queen of every apostolate through the eternal predestination and vocation of God.

The vocation is the will of God Who destines some to a special state of life, distinguished from the ordinary. It is a sign of love of the Celestial Father Who entrusts a special mission to a person. The principal mission was entrusted to Jesus Christ.

St. John the Evangelist (John 3: 16) describes the mission of the Son of God with these words: "For God so loved the world that He gave His Only-begotten Son, that those who believe in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting. For God did not send His Son into the world in order to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him."

The Savior fulfilled this mission perfectly. He Himself said: "I have come down from Heaven not to do my will, but the will of Him Who sent me".

In his letter to the Philippians (Phil. 2: 8), St. Paul declared: "Jesus Christ humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross". With this obedience, Jesus made reparation for all the damage caused by the disobedience of Adam and Eve as well as for the sins committed by all mankind. Thus Jesus restored to God that

honor and glory which His creatures had taken away from Him. As for His work towards mankind, St. Peter briefly stated that Jesus "went about doing good". (Acts 10: 38.) He went about from city to city bringing both spiritual and physical health to all, with His doctrine, with His example, miracles and healing of the sick.

"He hath done all things well; He hath made both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak". (Mark 7:37.) Finally, and above all, by means of His Passion and death on the cross, Jesus redeemed the world, reopened the gates of Heaven, gave us back the grace we had lost, and left us Himself in the Holy Eucharist.

"You were not redeemed with corruptible things as gold or silver, but with the precious blood of Christ". (1 Peter 1: 18-19.)

In his letter to the Ephesians, St. Paul reminds them of Jesus Christ's redeeming and saving mission with these words: "Christ also loved us and delivered Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God to ascend in fragrant odor". (Eph. 5:2.)

Before ascending into Heaven, Jesus entrusted His mission to the Twelve whom He had chosen as His disciples: "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you". (John 20: 21.)

The Twelve too, had to give glory to God and peace to men.

The Twelve and their successors must preach, guide souls and sanctify them. "All power in Heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit". (Matt. 28: 18.)

What is the concept which every Christian has of Mary? She is the one chosen by God to give Jesus Christ to the world. Everything through Mary. She is the Apostle. In a certain measure, we too participate in her apostolate. Mary has its fullness, we have only a part of it: because we are always limited in power, or in time, or in space.

Every good that mankind has comes from Jesus Christ, Truth. He said: "I am the Truth": it is that Truth which saves, which renders us free and makes our thoughts certain. He said: "I am the Way": it is the way that we must follow; it is the way of peace, the way which leads to Heaven.

He said: "I am the Life": it is supernatural life; it is eternal life; it is the life of Jesus Christ in us. Every apostolate consists of giving something of Jesus Christ: is there not every good with Him? Apostolate of words, of example, of youth, of literature, of missions, of Catholic schools, of good works, of works of mercy, etc

Mary gave us Jesus: In Him there is every good. The Saints and those who have an apostolic

heart have a divided apostolate; Mary has it all. She is a universal apostle in space, in time, in goods and in every individual.

The apostles and the apostolates are for a certain place and for a certain period of time. Mary, instead, always gives; she gives to everyone; and everything comes to us through Mary.

Her mission and her vocation is to give Jesus Christ.

Usually she is represented in the act of giving or carrying Jesus, not only because her being the Mother of God is her greatest glory, but above all, to show that she brought Jesus to the world in general and to each soul in particular.

In the conclusion of his encyclical on the Mystical Body of Christ, Pope Pius XII summarizes the reasons for which the Blessed Mother is the Queen of the Apostles and has such an elect part in the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ.

“... may the Virgin Mother of God grant the prayers of Our paternal heart and they are yours too—and obtain for all a true love of the Church—she whose sinless soul was filled with the divine spirit of Jesus Christ above all other created souls, and who ‘in the name of the whole human race,’ gave her consent ‘for a spiritual marriage between the Son of God and human nature’ (St. Thomas q.

80, a. 1). Within her virginal womb Christ our Lord already bore the exalted title of Head of the Church; in a marvelous birth she brought Him forth as the source of all supernatural life, and presented Him, newly-born, as Prophet, King and Priest to those who, from among the Jews and Gentiles, were the first to come to adore Him. Furthermore, her only Son, condescending to His Mother's prayer in 'Cana of Galilee', performed the miracle by which 'His disciples believed in Him'. It was she, the second Eve who, free from all sin, original and personal, always most intimately united with her Son, offered Him on Golgotha to the Eternal Father for all the children of Adam, sin-stained by his unhappy fall, and her mother's rights and mother's love were included in the holocaust. Thus she who, according to the flesh, was the Mother of our Head, through the added title of pain and glory became, according to the spirit, the mother of all His members. She it was who, through her powerful prayers obtained that the Spirit of our Divine Redeemer, already given on the cross, should be bestowed, accompanied by miraculous gifts, on the newly founded Church at Pentecost; and finally, bearing with courage and confidence the tremendous burden of her sorrows and desolation, she, truly the Queen of Martyrs, more than all the faithful 'filled up those things that are

wanting of the sufferings of Christ . . . for His Body, which is the Church; and she continues to have for the Mystical Body of Christ, born of the pierced Heart of the Savior, the same motherly care and ardent love with which she cherished and fed the Infant Jesus in the crib.

“May she, then, the Most Holy Mother of all the members of Christ, to whose Immaculate Heart We have trustfully consecrated all mankind, and who now reigns in Heaven with her Son, her body and soul refulgent with heavenly glory—may she never cease to beg from Him that copious streams of grace may flow from its exalted Head into all the members of the Mystical Body. May she throw about the Church today, as in times gone by, the mantle of her protection and obtain from God that now at least the Church and all mankind may enjoy more peaceful days.”

The figure which Isaias draws of Mary is beautiful: “And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root”. (Isa. 11: 1.) A bud will blossom from the root of Jesse, a flower will sprout from this root and the Spirit of God will rest upon him. The rod or branch is Mary; her flower or fruit is Jesus Christ. Mary’s mission and apostolate is to give Jesus Christ to the world.

Certain persons have been destined by God to spend their whole life in the apostolate dedicating to it their intelligence, their health, their time, their heart: their all. God has separated them, segregated them: "Set apart for Me Saul and Barnabas unto the work to which I have called them" (Acts 13:2). Religious, Priests, Sisters, Missionaries—all are called for a special work; to them, as to Mary, an Angel (confessor, preacher, friend or superior) will make the proposition. . . .

Correspond to the call. The rich youth did not correspond; because of the attachment to his great possessions he withdrew sad. The Apostles were prompt, generous and constant: "And immediately they left their nets and their father, and followed Him". (Matt. 4:22.)

Help vocations. Vocations should be helped materially: with offerings of money; morally: with good advice, assistance, instructions, schools, the pulpit, the confessional and with corrections.

The apostolate is the work of all works. Contemplate Mary in her daily spiritual and material cares and attentions for the great Apostle: the Child Jesus.

St. John Bosco and St. Augustine owe their vocation mainly to their respective mothers.



Queen of Apostles, pray to the Lord, the Master of the harvest, to send good laborers to reap it. Have mercy on these poor people who lie in darkness and in the shadow of death, without a pastor and without a guide. Send to them holy ministers of God, catechists, formative reading: so that souls may be saved from eternal damnation.

CHAPTER III

CHRISTIANIZATION OF THE WORLD THROUGH MARY

The world was Christianized through Mary and only through Mary: behold the Apostle, not just an apostle. The world will be completely Christianized if Mary will be known, imitated and invoked throughout the world as the Apostle, yesterday, today, and throughout the centuries.

Priests and Christian souls, let us reflect: the world does not arrive at Christ because as yet the way is not sufficiently pointed out: Mary. Let us guide souls and society to Mary in a wiser and more profound manner. This world is a prodigal son; it finds it hard to return to the Father; but if it is shown that the Mother is standing on the doorstep waiting to receive it, what hope and encouragement that will give!

Literature, sermons, projects, initiatives, efforts and expenses are multiplied... but Jesus is always found as He was found by the shepherds and the Magi. "... And they found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in the manger." It is a fact which must always repeat itself and which will be

repeated until the end of time. If Mary is not found, Jesus will not be found. As yet, the profound meaning of the words: "A woman ruined all; a woman repairs all", has not been penetrated. If Mary were considered according to the profound sense of the Church and of the Scriptures, how fewer souls would go lost; how fewer errors and disorders there would be! . . . Out of two billions of men, only four hundred million are Catholics! How far then, has the Redemption reached? The Redemption was accomplished, but it does not reach everyone or at least it is lost because the children abandon the Mother.

As long as the Rosary remains in a family, Jesus, Way, Truth and Life remains.

Man bows to the Mother; the world will bow to Mary, who will show Jesus.

*

St. Cyril of Alexandria exalts Mary, the Apostle of the world: "Because of you the Trinity is glorified; because of you the cross is adored and exalted upon the earth; because of you, Heaven rejoices; the Angels and Archangels are happy; the demons are cast out and man himself is raised to Heaven; because of you, everyone wrapped in the error of idolatry arrived at the knowledge of truth; because of you, men reached holy baptism and the Church extended herself to all parts of the earth.

With your help people do penance; because of you the Only Son of God, true Light, illuminated those who were in darkness and in the shadow of death. Because of you, the Prophets announced and the Apostles preached salvation to mankind."

How difficult it is for children who remain orphans to grow up as good as they should. So it is with men in respect to Mary. Let us think of the role a good mother plays in a family: she is the queen of the house. So it is with the Blessed Virgin, Mother of men in the human family.

Never let the consolations and goods of this Mother be lacking to the poor children of Eve who are mourning and weeping in this valley of tears!

Evil entered the world because man detached himself from God Who is Goodness. The present evils which are to be found in the world exist because God has been abandoned. This happened in the past; this happens to us today; this will happen in the centuries to come.

We have precipitated into a chaos of errors, of moral disorders, of superstitions, of false devotions and of material miseries. What is the cause of all this? Bishop Toth Thiamer, orator and professor at the University of Budapest answers: "In an ultimate analysis, wars are not instigated by the leaders of a government, but by unbelieving teachers, by irreligious and materialistic literature, by

secularism in social life, and by plutocracy. These are the assassins of the people. Wars are but a logical consequence of an anti-Christian culture." Enormous technical conquests have been made, but there is a desolating retrogression in the human spirit and thought among the various Christian peoples. Civilization has become a body without a soul.

And for those peoples who never knew Jesus Christ? The picture is desolating.

In his radio message (May 14, 1942), Pope Pius XII indicated that the skepticism of our epoch is "the cause of war". During the same year, while consecrating humanity to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, he said that the world "is a victim of its own iniquities". That which St. Augustine wrote, speaking about the decline of the Roman Empire, is being renewed: "In order that a people prosper and be happy, it is necessary that justice be the queen, charity be the law, and eternity be the goal".

Nowadays humanity has lost its soul and it feels its absence.

Pope Pius XI had written: "The only means with which to uplift human society is the practice of a Christian life". But which is the method and the way?

Pope St. Pius X indicated the way in the Christian axiom: "To Jesus through Mary". On Febru-

ary 2, 1904, he demonstrated with theological eloquence that the veneration of Mary is a certain and efficacious means. Its principles are very clear.

“Who does not see that there is no way so secure and walk more rapid than Mary to unite all to Christ and, through Him, obtain the perfect adoption of children, so that we are holy and immaculate in the presence of God?”

First reason: If to Mary was truthfully said: “Blessed is she who has believed, because the things promised her by the Lord shall be accomplished”, that is, that she would conceive and bring forth the Son of God; if she received in her womb Him Who by nature is Truth, so that, begotten with a new order and with a new nativity, invisible in Himself, He should become visible in our flesh, being the Son of God made Man, Author and Fulfiller of our Faith; it is necessary that His Most Holy Mother be recognized as participant and almost custodian of the Divine Mysteries; upon whom, as upon a foundation, the most noble after Christ, rises the edifice of the Faith of all centuries.

Second reason: Such is the will of God; because He could have given us the Savior in another way, but He willed that we should receive Him from Mary. St. Pius X said: “Divine Providence being pleased that we should have the Man-God through Mary

who bore Him in her womb, no other way remains for us than to receive Him from Mary's hands."

And he points out how in the ancient Scriptures the Savior is always announced as the Son of the Woman, the Flower of the Rod, Mary, the Fruit of her womb. Thus the Patriarchs sighed for Him; and the Holy Father concludes: "After Christ, we find the end of the Law, the fulfillment of the figures and of the oracles in Mary".

Third reason: It is clear that through Mary and through her more than through any other means, one goes to Jesus, because she was the only one among all, with whom Jesus, as is fitting in a son toward his mother, was united with familiarity and with thirty years of intimate family life. To whom, more than to Mary, were profoundly revealed the admirable mysteries of the birth and of the boyhood of Jesus and, above all, the Mystery of the Incarnation, which is the beginning and foundation of the Faith? Not only did Mary keep in her heart and meditate upon the events of Bethlehem and the facts of the losing and finding of Jesus in the Temple, but, partaker of Christ's thoughts and of His secret will, she lived, one might say, the very life of the Son. Hence no one knew Christ so well and so profoundly as she

did; no one is a better guide and teacher to make us know Christ.

Therefore no one will be more powerful than the Blessed Virgin to unite men to Christ. In fact, it is true, according to the statement made by Jesus Christ Himself: **"This is everlasting life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Him Whom Thou hast sent, Jesus Christ"**; but, obtaining our knowledge of Christ through Mary, through Mary we will also more easily obtain that life of which Jesus Christ is the beginning and font.

Fourth reason: Mary is a good Mother. And isn't Mary the Mother of Christ? Therefore she is also our Mother. In fact, we must believe that Jesus, the Word of God made man, is also the Savior of mankind. As God-Man, He had a physical body; as Savior, He had a Mystical Body, that is, the society of believers: **"We are many in one body in Christ"**. Now, Mary did not only conceive the Eternal Son of God so that He should become man by taking His human nature from her, but that He should also be the Savior, as the Angel said to the Shepherds: **"There has been born to you today . . . a Savior, Who is Christ the Lord"**. Hence in the same sole womb of the most chaste Mother, Christ took flesh for Himself; and united to Himself the Mystical Body formed by all those "who would

have believed in Him". Thus Mary, by carrying the Savior in her womb, can be said to also have carried all those whose life was contained in the life of the Savior. Therefore, as St. Paul writes, **we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones**, we have emerged from Mary's womb, as a body attached to the Head. In a mystical, though true manner, we are Mary's children, and she is everyone's Mother: **Mother spiritually, but truly of the members of Christ which we are**. If, therefore, Mary is both Mother of God and Mother of mankind, who will doubt that she will devote herself, with all care, so that Christ, Head of the body of the Church, will transfuse in us, His members, His gifts and above all, that of knowing Him and living for Him.

Fifth reason: Mary not only "gave the substance of her flesh to the Only-Begotten Son Who was to be born with human limbs and thus furnish the Victim for the Sacrifice, but she also had the duty of guarding and nourishing the same Victim, and at the designated moment presenting Him for the Sacrifice. Hence a continuous union of life. Then, when the supreme hour arrived, Jesus' Mother was standing by the Cross . . . happy that her Only-Begotten had been offered for the salvation of all mankind".



“Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.”

Luke 1, 28.

From this the Holy Father deduces that Mary was the Coredemptrix; and before her Son Mediatrix and Consolatrix, Minister of the distribution of graces. Jesus is the Source from Whose fullness we all receive. According to St. Bernard, Mary is the Aqueduct which transmits the waters of grace to us. Or, according to St. Bernardine, she is the Neck by which the body remains united to the Head, and the Head transmits strength and virtue to the body.

Sixth reason: From the house of Nazareth up to Calvary, Mary was Jesus' constant companion; she, more than anyone else, knew the secrets of His Heart, and, with an almost maternal right, administers the treasures of His merits. It follows that she is the principal and surest support to know and love Jesus. Pope St. Pius X said that those who, through diabolical deception or through prejudices, think that they can do without the Blessed Virgin, find themselves in a deplorable condition. Poor and unhappy people! They neglect Mary with the pretext of honoring Jesus; but they do not know that "the Son is not found without Mary His Mother". "No homage is more pleasing to Mary than that of knowing and loving Jesus."

We conclude: He who finds Mary finds the life which is Jesus Christ. For this reason Pope Pius

XII pointed out the **Immaculate Heart of Mary** as the hope and the way of salvation for all. And to her he consecrated the world.

"Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, Help of Christians, Refuge of the human race, Conqueror of God's battles! We humbly prostrate ourselves before thy throne, confident that we shall receive mercy, grace, bountiful assistance and protection in the present calamity, not through our own merits, of which we do not presume, but solely through the great goodness of thy maternal Heart.

"To thee, to thy Immaculate Heart, in this, humanity's tragic hour, we entrust and consecrate ourselves, in union not only with the Mystical Body of thy Son, holy Mother Church, now in such suffering and agony in so many places and sorely tried in so many ways, but also with the entire world, torn by fierce strife, consumed in the fire of hate, victim of its own wickedness.

"Mayest thou be moved to compassion at the sight of the widespread material and moral destruction, of the sorrows and anguish of countless fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters and innocent children, at the sight of the great number of lives cut off in the flower of youth, of bodies mangled in horrible slaughter, and of tortured and agonized souls in danger of being lost eternally.

“O Mother of mercy! Obtain peace for us from God, and, above all, procure for us those graces which prepare, establish and assure peace. Queen of peace! Pray for us and give to the world now at war the peace for which all peoples are longing, peace in the truth, in the justice and in the charity of Christ. Give peace to the warring nations and to the souls of men, that in the tranquillity of order, the kingdom of God may prevail.

“Extend thy protection to the infidels and to all those still in the shadow of death; give them peace and grant that on them too, may shine the sun of truth, that they may unite with us in proclaiming, before the one and only Savior of the world: ‘Glory to God in the highest and peace to men of good will’.

“Give peace to the peoples separated from us by error or by discord and, especially, to those who profess singular devotion to thee and in whose home an honored place was ever accorded thy venerated image (today, perhaps kept hidden to await better days); bring them back to the one fold of Christ under the one true Shepherd.

“Obtain peace and contemplate freedom for the holy Church of God; stay the spreading flood of modern paganism; enkindle in the faithful the love of purity, the practice of the Christian life and

apostolic zeal, so that the servants of God may increase in merit and in number.

“Lastly, as the Church and the entire human race were consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, that in reposing all hope in Him, He might become for them the sign and pledge of victory and salvation, so we, in like manner, also consecrate ourselves forever, to thee, to thy Immaculate Heart, O our Mother and Queen of the world. This we do, that thy love and patronage may hasten the triumph of the kingdom of God, and that all nations, at peace with one another and with God, may proclaim thee blessed and with thee may raise their voices to resound from pole to pole in the chant of the everlasting Magnificat of glory, love and gratitude to the Heart of Jesus, where alone they can find Truth, Life, and Peace.”

CHAPTER IV

APOSTOLATE OF THE INTERIOR LIFE

An apostle is one who carries God in his own soul and irradiates Him to all who are around him.

He is a saint who accumulates treasures and shares them with others.

An apostle is one who loves God and men so ardently that he cannot keep his feelings and thoughts to himself.

He is a monstrance which contains Jesus Christ and radiates an ineffable light around him.

He is a vessel of election who, because he is overflowing, gives to all so that they too may be happy.

He is a temple of the Holy Trinity, who is most active; he evinces the presence of God in him by his words, works, prayers, actions and attitudes, both in public and in private.

Now then, with this description of an apostle, examine the face of persons both far and near. In it do you recognize an apostle? You will find it in the high degree and in unattainable similarity in Mary's face. After Mary comes St. Paul.



Interior sanctity is the first and most essential apostolate, unconfoundable and unsubstitutable. If there is interior life, there is always the apostle, whether he be an Anthony in the desert, a Cistercian who lives in silence or a lay-Sister in a cloister performing the humblest tasks.

a) The soul which is interiorly holy injects into the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, which is the Church, a pure and vivifying blood which is helpful to the members, augments their number and strengthens them for the battles of God.

St. Paul often speaks to us about this Mystical Body. Pope Pius XII clearly exposed the doctrine of the Church regarding this subject in his Encyclical "Mystici Corporis Christi". Many books have explained this subject. Now, in a body, the hand, the foot and the tongue perform their duties externally; everyone sees that. But the heart, though invisible, performs a greater, a far more important function. The weapons in our power are not human but divine, capable of overcoming evil and the works of evildoers, of overcoming all doctrines which oppose God and Jesus Christ, of conquering every intellect and winning it to Christ. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not make war according to the flesh; for the weapons of our war-

fare are not carnal, but powerful before God to the demolishing of strongholds, the destroying of reasoning—yes, of every lofty thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every mind into captivity to the obedience of Christ”. (2 Cor. 10:3-6.)

Of this pure blood, of this supernatural life, of these hearts which always belong to Christ, the Church always lives: from the Cenacle until today, and then for the centuries to come.

Great are the words of Our Lord Jesus Christ: “And for them (the disciples) I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth”. (John 17:19.) From Him, grace is passed on to the Saints, and the latter, having an overabundance, pass it on to us.

b) The Saints are powerful intercessors before God according to the number of their merits and their degree of sanctity. Their power of intercession corresponds to the union with God which they had on earth.

St. Augustine tells us that prayer is man's strength and God's weakness. In fact, God has promised to listen to our petitions: “Whatever you shall ask, believe that you shall receive, and it will be given to you . . .”. What an apostolate Jesus exercised on the Cross amidst His agonies, praying for

sinner, sending up His cry, "I thirst". He saved the world more with His Passion and Death rather than with His preaching, in our manner of speaking.

c) The real apostolate is the one which grafts itself, becomes one with and conforms itself to the apostolate of Jesus. It is inspired by the same incentive: the glory of God and peace to men. Many, among those who call themselves apostles, do not strive for the greater glory of God. They are noisy cymbals, chiming bells, wind which puffs one up; but then all is dispersed. Many, too many, seek their own interests rather than those of Jesus Christ. The man of God judges things under the light which comes from above; he understands the part they play in God's redemptive plan more than their exterior aspect. Failures do not dishearten him; God can be glorified by his very humiliation. His aim, his intention is always God and souls. Hence every apostolate acquires ever more supernatural characteristics, efficacy and vitality. God is everything; the souls are in God's arms: "My dear children, with whom I am in labor again, until Christ is formed in you". (Gal. 4: 19.)

"When God wills that a work be entirely from His hands, He reduces all to impotence, then He sets to work." When the ego is annihilated, God lives. With Jesus Christ's program, one works with Him, in Him, through Him. And when God is with

us, who will be against us? We cannot have a greater security than that "the Lord worked with them and confirmed the preaching . . ." (Mark 16:20.) This Apostle will be able to do all: "The works that I do he also shall do and greater than these shall he do". (John 14:12.)

Mary is the holiest of all: hence she is the first apostle; in fact, she is the Apostle.

To the Mystical Body of Christ, that is, to the Church, Mary made the principal contribution with her sanctity: a vigor, an exuberance of abundant life. Her fullness: "full of grace", overflowed upon all the souls: from St. John the Evangelist to St. John Bosco; from the Martyrs to the Virgins; from the Popes to the pious laborer.

Christ is the life; from the Head, this life descended to the members; and everyday He vivifies new souls in Baptism, in the Eucharist, in Penance. These souls live of Christ.

Through divine elevation, Mary is constituted the great Mother of those redeemed by Christ. She is at the head of the new family which Jesus Christ formed. As Eve, mother of mankind in regard to the body; thus Mary inaugurated a new, Christian and holy species. Our spiritual Mother, she transfused her life into us, by generating us in the pains of Calvary. In the "Hail, Holy Queen" the Church greets her as "life".

A mother transfuses into her children her blood, and often her character, her qualities, her tendencies. Mary transfuses into the souls her tendencies, her tastes, her love, her own self. And the more a soul draws nearer to her, the more Mary does this: "In me there is all hope of life and virtue".

Mary is Queen. That which belongs to the Queen also belongs to her subjects. People are as strong as their sovereign is powerful. How fortunate we are to have so powerful a Queen: "Greater than a creature"; her goods and her power are all for us: she uses them in favor of her subjects and children.

Mary has become the hope of all: of the sinner, of the infirm, of the just, of the poor, of the shipwrecked: of everyone.

She is called the suppliant omnipotence.

St. Peter Damian writes: "When Mary presents herself to the throne of God, it is not so much to supplicate as it is to make her will known: because she does not approach as a servant, but as Mother and as Queen".

This declaration is addressed to Mary: "What our Lord can do through nature, you can do through grace".

Hence Mary's graces are innumerable: light of the Fathers, wisdom of the Doctors, destroyer of heresies, life of the Church. From Heaven she ac-

completes an immense, perpetual, most efficacious apostolate and St. Germain says to her: "No one is freed from an evil, if not through you, O most Immaculate; no one receives a good, if not through you, O merciful Lady; no one wins the final battle, if not through you, O most holy Virgin". Mary's prayer caused Jesus to begin His public ministry in Cana: "This first of His signs Jesus worked at Cana of Galilee". (John 2:11.)



Let the souls rejoice who, in silence, pray and suffer.

The world provokes God to indignation and punishment! But the above-mentioned souls save the world with reparation. They work in the edification of the body of Christ, perhaps more and even better than those who travel the world, who exhaust themselves in hard undertakings. "A soul truly called to the cloister, enters to find God and to exercise the most efficacious apostolate for souls: to destroy the old man and replace him with the new: "For me to live is Christ".

St. Paul's heart was the Heart of Jesus Christ.

The most pure heart of Mary was the most apostolic after that of Jesus.

The supernatural goods of mankind emanated from the Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

After the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, no other heart ever loved mankind as much as the Heart of Mary.

The Saint has a certain omnipotence. To kill a giant it is sufficient to use a pebble detached from the mountain.

Theresa plus four cents are nothing. Four cents are nothing, Theresa is nothing. But Theresa, four cents and God are everything.

The apostolate is never more vastly and more efficaciously exercised than when one makes his examination of conscience, mortifies his pride and is interiorly active.

In colleges, in schools, in catechetical works, in the confessional, in the pulpit, in the Catholic associations, in the Religious Institutes, in the families, in the hospitals, in the seminaries, in the parishes . . . the interior life of him who guides has a decisive influence. He who guides has the future of his children in his hands: for life and for eternity. It is often well to say: one activity less, and a half hour more for God by meditating and praying; or: activities, yes, but vital ones. Sow, yes, but water with prayer. It is a truth of faith: "God gives growth". (1 Cor. 3: 7.) Dig a spring of water which will irrigate the planted field. It is well to have a large and perfect electric plant, but one must put in the current in order that the city be illuminated;

that the factory be in productive activity. Let us seek sanctity; but let us seek it through Mary.

Let it be retained as certain that a soul cannot really be devoted to Mary if it does not have a thirst for souls, for Jesus. This soul would neither resemble Jesus the Apostle, nor Mary the Apostle; only the imitators of Mary are her children and are united to Jesus. How can he, who does not possess the heart and mind of Jesus and Mary, live the life of union with Jesus and Mary? Jesus reminds all of God's lovers: "The second commandment is similar to the first: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself".

CHAPTER V

THE APOSTOLATE OF DESIRES

Mary was not only Immaculate and enriched with grace, but also had infused knowledge.

Such knowledge gave the Blessed Virgin the possibility of having holy desires, aspirations, petitions and vows. These are a true apostolate, in fact they are the foundation and beginning of every apostolate.

First as a child in her parents' home, then in the Temple, Mary's heart desired the Redemption and the salvation of mankind more than the most ardent Saints.

On November 21, the Church celebrates the "Presentation of Mary Most Holy in the Temple".

The following is the object of this feast: "At the age of three the child Mary was taken to the Temple of Jerusalem by her parents, St. Joachim and St. Anne, and was offered to Our Lord". Thus some of the Fathers and especially St. John Damascene, narrate.

Holy desires are born of a lively faith and from a loving heart and are the first step toward

good works. They are like the seed that opens, pushes its tiny roots into the earth and develops into a tiny tree, destined to grow and bear fruit. If they arrive at prayer they already bear very precious fruit.

There are many empty sterile, strange and evil desires; just as there are lazy and at times sinful criticism. Hence St. Paul said: "Flee youthful desires".

Instead there are the desires of God "Who wishes everyone saved and that every man arrive at the knowledge of truth".

St. Paul had ardent desires: "So we in our love for you would gladly have imparted to you not only the Gospel of God, but also our own souls". (1 Thess. 2:8.) "I desire to depart and to be with Christ: having a great desire to die and to go with Christ."

In Psalm 41: 2 we read: "As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so my soul panteth for Thee, O God".

Hence good desires are to be cultivated: "My soul grows faint with longing for Thy decrees at all times" (Ps. 118:20), says the Psalm.

Under the guidance of Joachim and Anne, and nourished by the Sacred Scriptures, Mary grew as a promising olive tree; she was as the seat of all virtue. By reading the Scriptures and learning by

word of mouth, those aspirations became the apostolate of desires for the coming of the Messias and for the redemption of mankind.

Jesus is the Desired of the Gentiles. (Aggeus 2:8.) The Patriarchs, the Prophets, all the Just and all the Nations of ancient times desired Him. Mary Most Holy desired Him more than everyone, more efficaciously than everyone, more intelligently than everyone.

They were not desires of pure sentimentality, but efficacious desires, which went directly from her Heart to the Heart of God.

The Prophet Daniel was the "Man of desires": he desired the glory of God and the salvation of mankind; the soul that so desired the redemption of his people and of humanity. The end of the Babylonian captivity and the coming of the Messias, which he had desired, were revealed to him. How, then, could God not grant the desires of a little, humble and most holy Virgin? What was the fruit of these sighs with which she addressed Heaven? She solicited the redemption of the world more than the Prophets, the Patriarchs and the good Hebrews did.

"Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the Just." (Isa. 45:8.)

With what efficacy the celestial child lifted her hands and eyes toward Heaven, repeating Isa-

ias' prayer (45: 8.): "Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the Just; let the earth be opened, and bud forth a Savior; and let justice spring up together."

Both the Doctors and the Theologians of the Church agree that the coming of the Savior was hastened because of the ardent sighs of the Most Holy Virgin.

The Venerable Pallotti summarizes them and writes: "In the adorable decrees of God it was established that the Just, and especially the Queen of Saints, with their mortifications, fasts and desires, should hasten the Incarnation of the Son of God. And so it came about, notwithstanding the fact that the world was soiled with sin and unworthiness."

In William's "Life of Mary", we read a touching passage: "Everything in Mary's existence served to attract the Word of God in her womb: especially the fact of her virginal consecration to God".

Certainly it can be affirmed that, at the Temple, Simeon, just and God-fearing, awaited the salvation of Israel; Anna supplicated God day and night to hasten the coming of the Messias; but more than everyone else, Mary did. In her solitude, she offered herself in sacrifice for the salvation of Israel and of the whole world. She was like the dove that coos on the ruins of a great edifice: man

who had come out from the creative and sanctifying hands of God, had been disfigured by original sin. And his sighs were heard by the Father Who was moved to restore the edifice in Christ: "To re-establish all things in Christ". (Eph. 1: 10.)

Simeon prayed ardently and had received a communication from the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Savior. In the Temple Anna prayed, sighed, fasted: and she immediately recognized the Messiah when Mary and Joseph presented themselves with the Infant for the purification. With great joy and faith they thanked the Lord. Mary had desired Him.

She exercised the apostolate more than anyone else. The apostolate is to give Christ to the World.

These desires lasted in Mary from her Immaculate Conception until the moment in which, having pronounced her Fiat (May it be done), the Son of God was made flesh in her womb.

In fact, the "fullness of time" came. (Gal. 4:4.) The Archangel Gabriel was sent to the Virgin to announce that the moment foretold by the man of desires, Daniel, had come and to offer Mary the divine maternity. It was the great hour of mankind.

God grants holy desires, He hears the sighs of the just when they groan before the altar of God.

How many souls in the silence of the cloister, in their intimate communication with God, perhaps even amidst pains and sorrows, make themselves heard by God! The celestial Father's heart is moved to pity for these children who place all their trust in Him and repeat: "Thy kingdom come".

"Thou, O Lord, hast heard the desire of the afflicted." (Ps. 10:17.) "Thou hast given him his heart's desire." (Ps. 20:3.)

When Mary appeared on earth, dawn appeared; messenger and bearer of the Sun of Justice, Jesus Christ.

She, a child, was the Bride in the Canticles who called the Bridegroom Jesus Christ: "Show me, O Thou Whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest... Let my Beloved come into His garden... I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my Beloved, that you tell Him that I languish with love... I to my loved, and my Beloved to me..."



You tell me that you cannot exercise the apostolate. "I am small, I am in hostile surroundings, I am very much occupied, I am ill..." I answer you: "But who, or what can impede you from having good desires? If you cannot perform works, if you cannot walk at the head of Christ's army nor even

among His soldiers, . . . you can at least be in the rear-guard: with desires and sacrifices; following the work with lively interest.

We speak of apostolic desires; Jesus Master is the Model:

1. Jesus said: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem! . . . How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathers her young under her wings, but thou wouldst not!" (Matt. 23:37-38.) "I have greatly desired to eat this passover with you." (Luke 22: 15.) "I must be baptized with a Baptism (especially that of blood) and how I suffer the delay!" "Come to Me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matt. 11:28.)

2. The Psalmist abounds in the desires: "Praise the Lord, all ye nations, proclaim His glory, all ye peoples. Let kings of the earth and all nations, let old men together with children praise the Name of the Lord. The soul greatly desires to observe Thy law for all her life. I have great sorrow for those who do not follow it. Let them be confused."

"Praise, O servants of the Lord, praise the Name of the Lord."

3. The desires of ardent souls: "Lord, I should like to empty Purgatory. I desire that Your kingdom be extended to all the confines of the earth. I desire to love You with a thousand hearts and bless You with all the voices of the Angels and Saints of

Heaven." "Lord, I should like to live until the number of the elect be accomplished, to pray and suffer for all, to enter in the salvation of everyone. I intend to offer myself, in union with Jesus Host, as a victim for all. I should like to print as many copies of the **Catechism, the Great Means of Prayer and The Preparation for Death** as there are people on this earth; give each a copy in order to enlighten everyone; stop all sinners who are on the road to perdition, and give everyone the means of salvation. That all may know God and Jesus, Master, Way, Truth and Life. That all generations may sing the glories of Mary."

"Lord, during this night, I intend to make as many acts of love as each breath I take, each beat of my heart, the movements of my blood."

St. Catherine of Siena said one day: "In these sad times, how is it possible to care for all the ills the Church is suffering? I know what You will do: You will enkindle ardent souls in their desires; their works will be restricted, but their desires will be limitless: united together they will save the world."

In her convent, St. Gertrude prayed thus: "O my sweet love, I love You with my whole heart. If it were possible for me to bring all men to You, I would willingly travel the whole world barefooted, take them in my arms, and if necessary, even drag them, as long as I can satisfy Your ardent love. In

fact, I would willingly divide my heart into as many pieces as there are men living, in order to render them prompt and generous in loving Your Heart!"

St. Theresa of the Child Jesus had similar phrases: "I want to be Your spouse . . . Mother of souls . . . but this would not be enough for me; I feel the vocation of a warrior, Priest, apostle, doctor, martyr! Oh, to be at the head of the most heroic enterprises, to die for the defense of the Church. . . . With what love I would care for children! I wish I could enlighten the Doctors, the Prophets and with them announce the Gospel to the ends of the earth, to be a missionary, not for just a few years, but until the end of time."

St. Gertrude, St. Matilda, St. Thomas Aquinas teach that God accepts holy desires as though they were works. "God rewards desires as actions." (St. Matilda). "God gathers good resolutions as though they were works." (St. Gertrude).

God wanted that St. Gertrude carry the needs of the whole Church in her heart. She once asked Our Lord why He glorified St. James the Greater with so many prodigies and conversions at Compostella (Spain). She was answered: Because during his life he had had many desires to preach the Gospel all over the earth, but then he was the first to be martyred. Now he had the grace of accomplish-

ing from Heaven what he had desired to do on earth.

Do not fear! Even though a premature death may snatch you from your plans and activities, God will remember those sighs, those prayers, those desires.

The good works of a long life can be accomplished within a brief period of time. Jesus lived only thirty-three years, but He redeemed the world: He was the Apostle of the Father.

A Sister emits her Profession with her heart full of desires and resolutions of dedicating all her energies and her life to the apostolate of the school, of the missions and of beneficence. . . . But she dies shortly afterwards without having accomplished anything.

A Priest has just been ordained, but taken ill, he suddenly passes on to eternity without having even accomplished in part the program of his ardent zeal. . . . Will all go lost? No. The apostolate of desires has its great fruit: for the same Sister and Priest; for the glory of God; and for the souls they thought of.

Let our heart be an altar, the center of holy aspirations, holy desires, of ardent and great sighs: Thy kingdom come! Let your heart be big: let it embrace all peoples and all needs.

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Rouse Your power, O Lord, and come, we beseech You: so that, by Your protection we may be freed from the dangers which menace us for our sins; and we may be saved by Your liberating hand.

*

In the excellent book, **Discernment of Spirits**, Father Scaramelli writes: "At times the Spirit of God excites the desire for good things which, in reality He does not want executed. He only desires to find the will ready and a good disposition: He is satisfied with it." Thus God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his only son whom he loved dearly. Obedient, Abraham prepared for the holocaust; but, when he lifted the knife to strike, God held his hand: "Lay not thy hand upon the boy, neither do thou anything to him".

God inspired David to construct the Temple. But when David proposed to build it, He sent the Prophet Nathan to tell him: "Thou shalt not construct it, but thy son Solomon".

Thus there are souls who formulate the desire for martyrdom; but our Lord only wants the resolution; He is satisfied with it and will give the reward.

God inspires proposals of zeal to persons who will never actually be able to dedicate themselves

to the missions. The same may be said of proposals of penance and fasts of those who are too weak and have need of nourishment. There might even be proposals for a solitary life for those who must live in the family.

It is the voice of God Who, with these desires wants otherwise, that is: that prayers and sufferings be offered for the missions and for sinners; that mortifications of the will, of the tongue and of the heart be exercised; that, while living in the world, dangers be avoided.

God is pleased with holy desires, He blesses them and will also reward them.

CHAPTER VI

THE APOSTOLATE OF PRAYER

Ordinarily St. Paul presents himself to his Communities of faithful with this phrase: "Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ". Jesus Christ had elected the Twelve; then He added St. Paul: "This man is a chosen vessel to Me, to carry My Name among many nations and kings . . .". With such a presentation Paul clearly defines his mission and also his personal character of a man who strongly wills. His continual internal desire was to conquer the entire world. And in this daily task he did not know moderation. The will to conquer always excited him. The part of the world that was conquered was his prize which he defended as the eagle defends her young.

In perfect serenity of spirit, but with an even stronger will, Mary desired and sighed for the salvation of mankind.



The consequence of desires: prayer. It is the third apostolate. It is a most precious, easy and universal form of zeal. St. James recommended it.

“Pray for one another, that you may be saved. For the unceasing prayer of a just man is of great avail”. (James 5: 16.)

In his first letter to Timothy (2: 1.), St. Paul says: “I urge therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made for all men; for kings, and for all in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all piety and worthy behavior. This is good and agreeable in the sight of God our Savior, who wishes all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of truth.”

In this passage St. Paul recommends the apostolate of prayer. He states that it is pleasing to God; he declares it a useful and efficacious means for the evangelization of mankind and for their eternal salvation. In fact, this apostolate is an invoking of the mercy of God upon sinners, infidels, heretics; it is the act of asking God for everyone: light, an increase of faith, fervor in the divine service, perseverance in good.

Every human effort and the best initiatives would remain sterile without the grace of God. They would be like bodies that occupy space and have weight, but are deprived of soul and of life. **The soul of every apostolate is a divine life which bears fruit, and stable fruits.** Our works, without this divine life, are branches separated from the

vine, and hence destined to die, "for without Me you can do nothing". (John 15: 5.) Could' man, with his natural energies, and moreover, his weaknesses, expect to accomplish supernatural works? Such rashness would be a folly and an error to be considered unexplainable in one who dedicates himself to an apostolate.

The holy Cure of Ars said: "The life of prayer is the great happiness of this earth. O beautiful life! beautiful life! Beautiful union with God! Interior life is a bath of love in which the soul is immersed to remain, as it were, drowned in love. . . . Eternity will not be long enough to understand this happiness. . . . God holds the soul as a mother holds the head of her child in her hands to cover it with kisses and caresses."

St. Francis of Assisi said: "Prayer is the source of grace. Preaching is the canal that distributes the graces received from Heaven. The ministers are the heralds of their king, chosen to bring to the people what they have learned and gathered from the mouth of God and the Most Holy Eucharist."

"Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it". (Ps. 126: 1.)

But "with God I can do all things".

a) **Mary is the Apostle with prayer:** because she prayed more than anyone, and better than any-

one. A holy life is the most perfect and efficacious prayer.

There is a precept: always pray, "it is profitable to pray always". There is a prohibition: "never lose heart". (Luke 18: 1.) No Saint so fully observed both the precept and the prohibition as did Mary.

How much Mary prayed from the moment of her Immaculate Conception up until the Annunciation! . . . She drew down the Word of God from the bosom of the Father to become incarnate and the fruit of her womb.

Her life is an incessant prayer. She pleased God because of her sanctity. In her the Father saw a worthy dwelling place for His Son, the object of His pleasures.

Before Mary, the Word of God had not yet found a worthy tabernacle prepared to give Him hospitality. . . . But finally He built it in Mary's heart. "Thou didst prepare a dwelling place worthy of Thy son." Made by God Himself, let us say, on the design of the Son, **all things were made through Him.** (John 1: 13.) It concerned that God Who prodigiously intervened, preserving Mary from original sin and adorning her with special graces. "She was pleasing because of her virginity, and became mother because of her humility."

Mary attracted the Son of God Incarnate with the enchantment of her beauty: "One is My dove,

My perfect one". (Cant. 6: 8.) For this reason the Holy Spirit copiously flowed in Mary: "The Holy Spirit descended upon you". With the perfume of her virtues Mary attracted her Beloved to come to her to take delight in the garden of her heart, as it is written in the Canticle of Canticles.

b) **With mental and oral prayer.** Both the Fathers and Doctors of the Church agree that Mary hastened the hour of the coming of the Redeemer with her prayers. According to God's plan, Mary had to carry within herself the three ages of the world: appear before Jesus, the Old Testament; live with Him; be grafted in the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, the Church. Hence she awaited the Messiah with the most elect souls of the Old Testament; she adored Him with the Shepherds, the Magi and St. Joseph; after the Ascension of Jesus into Heaven, she is the most holy and venerated member of the Church.

Mary's duty stands out more clearly during the period of preparation. The expectation of the Redeemer was the constant preoccupation of the Jewish people; a preoccupation which became stronger as the time drew closer. No one among the Hebrews was so enlightened and holy as the most privileged creature: Mary. She awaited Him more than anyone else. The comments of the Bible

heard in the Temple opened for her great and new prospectives of the Messias, of His supreme beauty and of His mission among men. She understood the abyss of errors, vices, idolatry into which humanity had fallen. She invoked the Savior with the most ardent words of the Patriarchs: "Come, O Lord, and do not delay; come and save Thy people". These voices exerted a power in the designs of God: that of hastening the Incarnation of His Son. Prayer has some rights on the heavenly Father's Heart, especially when it comes from a humble heart, from innocence, from charity. Heaven answered her prayers. Behold: one day, in which Mary had prolonged her prayers and invocations, the Archangel Gabriel appeared and greeted her: "Hail, full of grace . . . He Who shall be born of thee shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Most High". The weight of Mary's prayers had caused God's scale to tip over on the side of mercy.

This is the apostolate which obtains vigor, constancy, efficacy for the preacher, for the writer, for the teacher, for the catechist, for the missionary, . . . for all those who exercise an apostolate of work or of words, written or printed. Hence in his second letter to the Thessalonians (3: 1.) St. Paul wrote: "Pray for us that the word of the Lord may run and be glorified even as among you".

A preacher made an agreement with a very humble soul: During the sermon stay in adoration so that it may bear fruits of conversions.

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The apostolate of prayer is simple, easy, obligatory, suited to all.

Many confessors, missionaries, writers, Bishops, have souls who give them the impetratory part of their good works and prayers. The former work and combat; the latter, in solitude or in the cloisters, as Moses on the mountain, keep their heart and arms open toward Heaven.

In the Church this apostolate has been organized as a vast association. It is found in all parts of the Catholic world and has many millions of members. If the prayers of one fervent soul are so valuable, how much more those of many souls united to impetrate! "If two of you shall agree on earth about anything at all for which they ask, it shall be done for them by My Father in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered together for my sake, there I am in the midst of them." (Matt. 18: 17-20.) The intention of this association is to promote the desires and the interests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. "Divine Heart of Jesus I offer You, in union with the Immaculate Heart of Mary, all my prayers, works and sufferings for the same intentions with which

You continuously offer Yourself on our altars. I offer them to You in particular according to the intentions recommended to the associates of the apostolate of prayer in this month and on this day."

More than half of mankind knows nothing of the Redemption. The joyful tidings have not yet been heard by many souls; they are in the same condition that we were in before the coming of Jesus Christ.

Pray with Mary so that the Kingdom of God may be extended; that the Church widen its conquests; that there be one shepherd and one fold.

Come, O Lord, bless the Catholic missions!

Let us pray with the child Mary at Nazareth; young girl at the Temple; adolescent when she heard ever more clearly in her soul the work of the Holy Spirit, Who was preparing her for the great mystery of the divine Maternity.

CHAPTER VII

THE APOSTOLATE OF EXAMPLE

Pope St. Pius X wrote: "In order to restore all things in Christ through the apostolate of prayer, divine grace is necessary; and the apostle does not receive it if he is not united to Christ. Only when we shall have formed Jesus Christ in us shall we be able to give Him to the families and to society with facility. All those who participate in the apostolate must possess a real piety" (Enc. 1905). The Holy Father adds that if the spirit is not regulated by a truly holy conduct it will be very hard to move others to do good. All those who consecrate themselves to the apostolate must be so free from stain of sin as to really be of good example.

St. Theresa had written: "A holy man, perfect and virtuous, does more good than many educated and active men who have less spirit".

Mary is the Apostle, because she attracts souls with the perfume of her virtues.



Jesus, the Apostle Who manifested the Father to mankind, is the Way and Model and Law

for every apostle. Now the Holy Gospel says of Him: He began with works, then He preached; first He practiced, then He counselled.

Jesus Christ compared the apostles to the salt and to the light.

The apostle is salt in so far as he is holy. If he is not, he should be thrown away and trampled upon.

The apostle who is pious, virtuous and true salt will preserve souls from corruption. His life, his example will be, to many, as the beacon light which illuminates the way. True "Light of the world" will make the ideal of the true happiness traced by Jesus Christ in the Beatitudes shine out.

That which leads the faithful to a practical Christian life is precisely the virtue of the one who teaches it. The torch of good example is more important than beautiful words. "Let your light shine before men, in order that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in Heaven" (Matt. 5: 16), said the Divine Master.

St. Gregory affirms that he who preaches great things must practice great virtue.

St. Paul often entreated his two beloved disciples Titus and Timothy to give good example: "Be thou an example to the faithful in speech, in conduct, in charity, in faith, in chastity". Later he himself invites the faithful: "What you see me do, thus do also; be imitators of me as I am of Christ".

In Cardinal Wiseman's book, *Fabiola*, the fact is clearly shown that Christianity is spread more through the example of charity, patience and goodness than through discussions.

Example exercises a notable power on the will: "Example serves where precept fails". The exemplary conduct of men, of up-right workers, of sincerely Christian parents will rouse admiration and respect in a Parish; while human respect, immorality, a disorderly life led by people who call themselves religious, are a scandal and a dishonor to the Church.

Consequently the admirable life of Mary Most Holy is a sermon which perpetuates itself through the centuries.

The virgins were won by the perfume of Mary's immaculate life. And these virgins are continually multiplied: it is calculated that there are eight hundred thousand Sisters. Mary is the **Queen of Virgins**.

The Confessors acquired their spirit of prayer, of faith and of charity from Mary. She is the **Queen of Confessors**.

The Martyrs were comforted by the vision of Calvary where they contemplated the Crucified and the Sorrowful Mother: she is the **Queen of Martyrs**.

Inspired by Mary and inflamed with zeal, the Apostles traveled the world and made it resound

with the echo of their words. She is the **Queen of Apostles**.

The virtue of humility predominates in her life: the episode of the Annunciation manifests it. Then the virtue of charity: the episode of Mary's visit to St. Elizabeth proves it. Then her love for God: the canticle "Magnificat" is a spark of it and her death is its seal.

Life of faith: for this reason St. Elizabeth called her blessed: Blessed because you believed.

Life of obedience: loving and entire: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; may it be done unto me according to thy word".

Life of labor: in the tiny house of Nazareth she was the strong, solicitous and most delicate Woman.

Life of patience: because she was tried by seven great sorrows; the last, at Calvary, surpassed all imagination.

She is the "Holy Virgin of virgins, Mother most pure, Virgin most prudent, Virgin most merciful, Virgin most faithful, Mirror of justice, Singular vessel of devotion"... because Mary is "Queen of all Saints". She preceded all in every virtue; she practiced all the virtues which were divided among the Saints. She knew and practiced others which the Saints, even the most notable, did not know nor practiced.

She practiced all these virtues in a human manner, in an unalterable peace, in a spirit of profound religiousness, in a modesty, in a singular amiability, in a retirement and humility always more constant, silent, joyful and loving. A singularity: a certain distinction of manners which comes solely from holy thoughts, from firmness of virtue, from the most elevated aspirations.

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Example is a sermon which ordinarily is made without making it. It is a life. St. Francis de Sales insisted a great deal that everyone should live holly in private, in his room, in solitude as though everyone saw him. He did just that. In order to see whether he practiced what he preached, small holes were bored in the walls of his room and it was ascertained that his behavior was always as when in church, holding conversation and at meals with others. External virtuous acts are not enough to edify souls. They must proceed from conviction and internal love.

On the day of the Universal Judgment, in the great light of God, everyone will see everything we did and how we did it: every single word and action, as well as every single thought and sentiment of the heart. Hence St. Bernard said: "Always be yourself everywhere". One day the hypocrite will reveal himself and be revealed: because he will

end by betraying himself. Even if he should succeed to dissimulate the truth, God penetrates the hearts, everything is known to Him and one day, with great shame, it will also be known to those from whom it was hidden, or who were deceived.

He will appear virtuous who really is virtuous.

St. Paul has severe words for the one who preaches and then does the contrary; for the one who condemns the evil he sees in his brother and then does that very same evil against which he has risen; against hypocrites who require a great deal from their neighbor, while with themselves they are very indulgent: "Wherefore, thou art inexcusable, O man, whoever thou art who judgest. For wherein thou judgest another, thou dost condemn thyself. For thou who judgest dost the same things thyself. And we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who do such things. But dost thou think, O man who judgest those who do such things and dost the same thyself, that thou wilt escape the judgment of God?" (Rom. 2: 1-3.)

It is necessary to be that which we desire to appear. Hence interior life is absolutely necessary.

Interior life is the activity to progress in faith, in virtue, in love of God.

The first charity is for ourselves. God wants us to love our neighbor as ourselves; not more than ourselves. In practice? To have greater care of our soul than that of the others. Our zeal must be ordinate: "Charity must be first exercised towards ourselves".

"I love Jesus Christ," wrote St. Alphonsus de Liguori, "therefore I burn with the desire to give Him souls; but first my own; then a great many others." And this is the practice which St. Bernard teaches: "He is not wise who does not know how to belong to himself".

And that which St. Bernard said to others he practiced first himself. The author of his biography, (Godfrey), his secretary, said of him: "First he dedicated himself totally to his own sanctification, consequently he sanctified others".

He then wrote to Pope Eugene III: "I am not telling you to withdraw completely from your occupations and duties; they are the will of God. But I exhort you not to let yourself be absorbed by them. If you are the man of the whole world, be more so for your own self. Otherwise, of what avail would it be to you to win everyone else and then lose yourself? Reserve the necessary time for yourself. If everyone comes to drink at your fountain, first drink of it yourself. Should only you remain with your thirst? Let all your reflections begin and

end with yourself. Be the first and the last for yourself; remembering that, in the affairs of your salvation, no one is closer than the only son of your mother."

Therefore, all generous apostles, all, must first make their own meditation and then the sermons or conferences to others. There must first be the correction of one's own conduct and then the reform of others. First there must be an intimate conversation with God and then conversation and exhortation with others. First have interior life, then exterior life. The retirement must be first, then showing and producing.

First one must prepare a program for oneself with confessions, monthly retreats, Spiritual Exercises, the Holy Mass, meditation, Holy Communion, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, the Rosary . . . then prepare rules for one's neighbor.

He who wishes to work, first nourishes himself. He who wishes to give, must first acquire. He who wishes to teach, must first learn.

CHAPTER VIII

THE APOSTOLATE OF SUFFERING

The crown and fulfillment of the apostolate of holy desires, of prayer and of good example is the apostolate of suffering.

Jesus Christ closed His life with the Passion and Death. And the saints who walk in His footsteps, follow His example.

"Suffering," says Father Faber, "is the greatest sacrament." This profound theologian shows us its necessity and deduces its glories. But all his arguments can be applied to the fecundity of action. The sacrifices of the apostolate united to the sacrifice of the cross, save souls. Our sighs and our tears, united to the spasms and agony of Jesus, acquire a divine power.

St. Paul reassures us that Jesus Christ, upon His first appearance in the world, offered Himself victim and oblation, to substitute Himself for all the victims of the ancient times: "Behold, I come to do Thy will, O God". This act remained unchanged for His entire life; and through Him we were saved. He had something like a holy mania that the time of sacrifice should arrive quickly; but in the mean-

time, at every moment He tasted some drop of His chalice during His days "for the life of the world". (John 6: 52.)

Mary is the Apostle of suffering, because she is the Queen of Martyrs.



A very discouraged Pastor once confided his troubles to the holy Cure of Ars. He told the Saint of the spiritual desolation of his parish: his work, the means used to uplift it, the failures, in fact, his continuous and growing pessimism, his resolution to abandon that sterile field of labor. After a few words of comfort, the Saint asked him a question which penetrated the Pastor's soul: "How often have you fasted? Have you reduced your hours of rest to the minimum? . . . Use these means: they will give you fruit and consolation."

For the redemption and salvation of souls, the sufferings of Jesus were sufficient, complete, overabundant; but only in the Head. The sufferings of Jesus in His mystical members, that is, in us, were still lacking. St. Augustine affirms it: "The sufferings were all fulfilled, but in the Head; the sufferings of Christ were still lacking in the members. Christ preceded in the Head; He is followed in the body."

And this is what St. Paul says about it: "What is lacking of the sufferings of Christ I fill up in

my flesh for His body, which is the Church". (Col. 1:24.)

Each Apostle can say: I am this body, because I am a member of Christ. And what is lacking to the sufferings of Christ, I must fulfill in myself, for His body which is the Church.

The apostolate of suffering is possible to all, with divine grace.

Often a necessity is made of a virtue, because everyone has something to suffer.

It is a most efficacious apostolate, because it is an associating of oneself to the Divine Patient, Jesus Christ.

It is the apostolate which distinguishes the true apostle from the apostle in name only.

God wanted to save the world, but by means of the sacrifice of His Incarnate Son. All of Jesus Christ's life was a cross and a martyrdom.

The Blessed Virgin always accompanied Him, from the crib to the sepulcher. St. Alphonsus de Liguori said that Mary's martyrdom was longer than that of Jesus. The intentions, the aims, the internal dispositions were similar, in fact, the same; they are identical, we would say, with those of Jesus Christ.

"Remember, O Virgin Mary, the sword of sorrow which Simeon's prophecy inflicted in your heart

when he predicted Jesus' death, and inflict the sword of contrition in our heart.

"Remember, O Virgin Mary, the sorrow you felt when you had to go to Egypt: lead us, your exiled children, from the darkness to the light and to the splendor of the eternal homeland.

"Remember, O Virgin Mary, the sorrow in your searching for three days for Jesus Whom you found in the temple: grant that we may always thirst for Jesus and that we seek Him always and everywhere and that our search be crowned with success.

"Remember, O Virgin Mary, the sorrow you felt when Jesus was captured and tied by His enemies, scourged and crowned with thorns: hear the cries of your children and break the chain of our sins.

"Remember, O Virgin Mother, the sorrow you experienced when Jesus was raised on the cross and among indescribable spasms rendered His spirit to the Father: grant that we may also participate in the Sacrifice of the Cross and in the Sacred Wounds of Christ.

"Remember, O Virgin Mary, the sorrow you experienced when the Most Sacred Body of Jesus was placed in your lap with a deep sentiment of piety: embrace us too, O Mother, in your arms so that we may enjoy your love.

“Remember, O Virgin Mary, the sorrow you felt when Jesus, wrapped in a sheet, was placed in the sepulcher: cleanse our souls with His Most Sacred Blood and at the end of our life infuse in us feelings of sincere compunction to open for us the door of Heaven.”

The Heart of Mary was the Heart of Christ, always. The sufferings in Mary were more intense than those of the Martyrs. She suffered because she loved Jesus. The intensity of love was the cause of the intensity of her sorrows. The Church applies to the Blessed Virgin the words which Jeremias said of Jesus Christ: “O all ye that pass by the way, attend and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow!”

The following contributed to render Mary’s martyrdom more intense: her perfect sensitiveness, her eminent sanctity, the great knowledge she had of God and of His perfections, the profound horror for the offenses to God, but more than anything else, her intense love for Jesus. And the more this flame blazed, all the more acute and cutting became the sword that pierced her.

No one loved Jesus as much as Mary Most Holy. When selecting her as the Mother of His Only-Begotten Son, the Father enkindled a most ardent flame in her Heart; a flame somewhat similar to that which from all eternity the Celestial Father has for His Son.

Mary not only loved Jesus as her Son, but also as her God. She loved Him with all her most holy Heart and above everything else.

This flame grew at Bethlehem, in the flight into Egypt, at Nazareth, in the Passion of her Son.

Bossuet says: "In order that this Virgin be a Martyr it is not necessary to kindle a pyre, neither to arm the executioners with sharp swords, nor to excite the anger of the persceutors. . . . One cross was sufficient for her and for her Beloved. O Eternal Father, do You desire that she be covered with wounds? Let her see those of her Son. Conduct her to the foot of the cross and let her Heart work. . . . If the scourgings furrow Jesus' body, Mary feels all the wounds. If a crown of thorns pierces His Head, Mary is tortured by all those points. If vinegar and gall are offered to Him, Mary tastes all the bitterness of it. If the body of Jesus is stretched on the cross, Mary suffers all the violence. . . ."

In order to console themselves, the Martyrs gave loving glances to the Crucifix; but for Mary every look augmented her own pain.

For this reason St. Bernard calls Mary not only a martyr, but more than a martyr.

St. Ildephonsus affirms that Mary's sufferings greatly surpassed those of the Martyrs even if taken

collectively. St. Augustine then adds that the Martyrs' pains were slight in comparison to those of Mary.

Today Jesus Christ is the target of contradictions. The anger of adversaries points against him who sides for Jesus Christ. "In the world you will find yourselves as lambs among wolves. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. The disciple is not above the Master. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. . . . But you are not of the world."

The Most Blessed Virgin Mary accepted the sufferings connected with the divine Maternity. When Simeon predicted that the sword would pierce her soul, Mary did not rebel: she bowed her head; the salvation of souls was at stake, the greater glory of God was to be procured.

Jesus Christ won by dying. He taught: "Have faith, I have won the world". There is no middle course: either with Christ, with the Gospel, with God, or against Jesus Christ, against the Gospel, against God.

St. James declares: "He who wishes to please the world takes his position against God".

It is useless to attempt it: One cannot serve two masters. He cannot be happy with Jesus Christ who wishes to play with the devil.

Speaking to Ananias in Damascus, Our Lord said of Saul: "This man is a chosen vessel to Me, to carry My name among nations and kings and the children of Israel: For I will show him how much he must suffer for My name".

A good electric power-station can give light and energy to an entire region. The apostolate of suffering can change the heart of a great population.

To expiate, to make reparation, to immolate oneself daily, signifies to contribute to the good of the world more than by fulfilling great works: "It is better to be a patient man rather than a strong man."

St. Peter writes: "If, after having done some good you suffer with patience, this is a grace before God, and precisely for this were you called, because even Christ has suffered for us, leaving you the example, so that you would follow in His footsteps".

St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, a poor Carmelite who lived for a brief period of time, was proclaimed by the Church as the Patroness of the Missions, and placed on the same level as the great Missionary, the evangelist of the Indies, St. Francis Xavier. St. Francis Xavier is the apostle of action, St. Theresa is the apostle of suffering. She had learned from Jesus to offer each day, and each moment,

her internal and external pains for the missions, for souls, for Priests.

It is possible for everyone to imitate her.

A Priest, the spiritual director of the students in Paris, one day received a visit from a Chinese gentleman.

"I am the president of the Atheist Club," said the visitor, "but I have come to ask you to instruct me in the Catholic religion. Frankly, however, I must tell you that I am not coming here to be converted, but to be able to more efficaciously combat your religion upon my return to China."

After reflecting for a few moments, the Priest accepted and set the days and the hours for the instructions.

Before beginning the instructions, however, the Priest went to visit a pious young girl who, for some weeks, had been sick and suffered intensely. He begged her to offer her sufferings for the conversion of that unbeliever. The sick girl gladly consented and even offered her life to God for that man's conversion.

After several lessons, the Priest began to despair of the conversion of that Chinese scholar. Each time the latter showed himself always more obstinate and angry in his attacks against Jesus Christ.

But one night, at about 11.00 P.M., the Priest heard the bell ring. He immediately went to the

door and was rather surprised to find before him the Chinese gentleman who was greatly agitated. He said:

“Reverend Father, it is useless that I still resist the voice of my conscience; I must become a Catholic; continue giving me the religious instructions with more intensity, so that I may more quickly receive Baptism.”

This time the conversation was quite prolonged.

But the next day the Priest received the news that the sick girl had died at about ten o'clock the previous night.

The Priest put the two facts together: the death of the young girl who had offered her life for the atheist and the unexpected and generous conversion of the latter to the Catholic Religion.

The convert was told of the girl's death and both he and the Priest acknowledged to whom the grace was due.

After several years the new Catholic narrated the fact to his fellow-countrymen and exhorted them to follow his example by listening to the exhortations of the missionaries.

CHAPTER IX

THE APOSTOLATE OF ACTION:

Beneficence

After the apostolate of holy desires, of prayer, of good example and of suffering comes the apostolate of works.

The apostolate of example disposes the souls and persuades them; the apostolate of beneficence wins them and firmly conquers them. Nothing so greatly induces us to accept teachings as hearing ourselves sympathized with in our sorrows and receiving help in our necessity.

Jesus did a great deal of good. The sickness of the body is an expressive image of the invisible sicknesses of the soul. In order to heal souls, Jesus healed the bodies. "They brought to Him all the sick suffering from various diseases and torments, those possessed, and lunatics, and paralytics; and He cured them". (Matt. 4: 24.) His thaumaturgic virtue was at the service of His most tender Heart.

Everyone knew this and freely took advantage of it. "And all the crowd were trying to touch Him, for power went forth from Him and healed all." (Luke 6: 19.)

How difficult it would be to speak of Heaven to him who is preoccupied with the present life and does not find help in his infirmities! How difficult it is to speak of the bread of the soul to him who has an empty stomach!

Mary is formed on Jesus; she is the most faithful copy of Him. She is the apostle of beneficence.

The kingdom of God is not of this world, but it is in this world. Expenses, human means, and temporal goods are always needed for schools, associations, worship, the infirm, Christian doctrine, the missions, convents, and literature.

The worker deserves his wages; he who serves at the altar must live of such service. In fact St. Paul says: "Do you not know that they who minister in the temple eat what comes from the temple, and that they who serve the altar have their share with the altar? So also the Lord directed that those who preach the Gospel should have their living from the Gospel." (1 Cor. 9: 13-14.) And to the generous who will contribute a recompense will not be lacking.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." (Matt. 5: 7.) Whereas: "Judgment is without mercy to him who has not shown mercy; but mercy triumphs over judgment." (James 2: 13.) It is to be observed that it is a good action to donate money, but it is better to perform good works, make sacrifices, consume one's life serving the sick, preach-

ing the Word of God, instructing the ignorant, printing and diffusing the divine word, producing and projecting instructive and religious films, giving images and sacred statues. . . . Charity assists these necessities.

After thirty years of private life, Jesus had to begin His public life. He had been baptized by John in the Jordan; He had already completed His fast of forty days; and had gathered together His first disciples.

"And on the third day a wedding took place at Cana of Galilee, and the Mother of Jesus was there. Now Jesus too was invited to the marriage, and also His disciples. And the wine having run short, the Mother of Jesus said to Him, 'They have no wine'. And Jesus said to her, 'What wouldst thou have Me do, woman? My hour has not yet come.' His Mother said to the attendants, 'Do whatever He tells you'.

"Now six stone water-jars were placed there, after the Jewish manner of purification, each holding two or three measures. Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water'. And they filled them to the brim. And Jesus said to them, 'Draw out now, and take to the chief steward'. And they took it to him.

"Now when the chief steward had tasted the water after it had become wine, not knowing whence it came (though the attendants who had

drawn the water knew), the chief steward called the bridegroom, and said to him, 'Every man at first sets forth the good wine, and when they have drunk freely, then that which is poorer. But thou hast kept the good wine until now.'

"This first of His signs Jesus worked at Cana of Galilee; and He manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him." (John 2: 1-11.)

Mary was at the wedding, either as a relative of the married couple or invited through politeness. She sought to serve more than to be served; she had an active part in the preparation and in the carrying out of the little nuptial feast, especially when Jesus and His disciples arrived. It was, therefore, a natural thing for her to notice that the wine was lacking. She wanted to spare that family from being mortified and there was only one way of doing so: a miracle; and she asked for it. She knew Who her Son was.

All proceeded with simplicity, naturalness, gentleness and amiability: only a few words, but they are the most beautiful prayer. There was nothing outstanding: neither humiliation nor ostentation. In the nobleness of her words and actions is reflected the nobility of her soul. Everything about her shows her solicitude for that family, not for herself.

Once that embarrassing situation was removed, the little feast gaily proceeded.

Behold an apostolate of **beneficence** and **charity**: helping one's neighbor in his necessities, practicing the corporal works of mercy.

Mary had declared herself the handmaid of God, but in her charity she made herself the servant of the servants of God. In them she sees the children and the brethren of her Son. Can one imagine a more sublime and, at the same time, a more attractive model of charity?

Both in her cousin Elizabeth's house and at Cana, Mary appears as the pious woman, given to household duties. She has an eye for all, she foresees and solicitously provides the material and temporal necessities of her neighbor with that attention of which her maternal heart is capable.

And her charity which obtains the miracle has the supernatural goods as its aim: she inclines and prepares the disciples and the wedding guests to believe in Jesus, true God, true Messiah. By means of material beneficence Mary aims at spiritual beneficence.

The adversaries of the Church frequently call themselves the friends of the people; they even procure them some goods, almost imitating true charity, but in reality they aim at tearing away from the

people their most precious goods, the faith, the practice of Christian life. This is a crime.

The Apostle St. John (1 John 3: 18.) says: "Let us not love in word, neither with the tongue, but in deed and in truth!"

No one could ever expect to exercise Jesus' apostolate of thaumaturgic beneficence in His way. There are other miracles, that is, marvelous things that were accomplished by the Saints in every century: "the prodigies of charity".

These render the truths believable and bend even the proudest foreheads. The charitable organizations promoted by Catholics, such as: hospitals, asylums, visits in the homes, the Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul, the special charities, such as assisting the infirm, the offerings for worship and other beneficent works are all exercises of this apostolate.

When Magdalene anointed Jesus' feet there were some who took this occasion to murmur against this as if it were a waste of money. Jesus defended the woman: "She has done Me a good turn. For the poor you have always with you; and whenever you want you can do good to them. . . ." (Mark 14: 7.) Hence contributions which regard the worship of God and contributions which regard the poor: all are good; each in its due time.

The end of beneficence is double: to do good to the bodies, but in order to arrive at their soul.



**“So they went with haste, and they found Mary and Joseph,
and the Babe lying in the manger.”** Luke 2, 16.

Jesus excited the faith by healing or else He purified the hearts. The examples of the woman with a hemorrhage, of the Canaanite woman, of the paralytic at the Pool of Bethesda are clear examples of this.

With the bread of the body give the bread of the soul; alternate and unite the spiritual cure to the physical cure of the infirm; besides giving asylum to the orphans and the aged, give them religious instructions. After multiplying the bread, Jesus spoke of the Eucharist, the bread of Heaven, which gives life to the soul.

Catholics will take part in the social and beneficent institutions which the Church encourages because they try to uplift the poor.

Even in the elections they will be solicitous to give their vote to persons who present a program of liberty and of respect for the Church.

The Venerable Pallotti, founder of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate, was called by Pope Pius XI, the Precursor of Catholic Action. In his ardor of charity he protested to want to be the bread of the poor, the drink of the thirsty, the dress of the naked, the eye of the blind, the sense of hearing for all the deaf . . . but all to save souls.

In the first place charity is to be given to our closest relatives, to those of the family, to those most needy. The Apostle says: "If anyone does not

take care of his own, and especially of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." (1 Tim. 5:8.)

The way of the heart is a great way to arrive at the faith.

He who calls himself a Catholic, but does not have charity, "his religion is vain".

The adversaries recognize the true Christians by their love: "Behold how they love one another".

The charitable man has great power over hearts; something divine radiates from his person. In fact God dwells in his heart, and this God is love: "God is love".

He who can give, let him give: "That which is superfluous, give to the poor". He who is able, should gather and give to the needy. He who has nothing to give, let him give his sympathy, his counsel, his comforting words, his smile, his prayer, his suffering, his faith.... Every Christian has great goods in his heart which surpass all riches. He who has faith should share it with him who suffers want of it.

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Grant to us Thy servants, we beseech Thee, Lord God, the enjoyment of perpetual health of mind and body; and, through the glorious intercession of blessed Mary ever Virgin, to be delivered from present sorrows and to enjoy eternal happiness in Heaven!

CHAPTER X

THE APOSTOLATE OF ACTION:

Preparation of the Victim

In the Annunciation, Mary redeemed us through Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Redeemer; Mary is the Coredemptrix.

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Jesus Christ is the Redeemer: "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace." (Eph. 1: 7.)

Or, in other words, from enemies of God we were reconciled to Him through the death of Jesus Christ: "For when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son." (Rom. 5: 10.) But in some way our reconciliation depends on Mary. She always kept us spiritually at her side, united in the same merciful intention, living days and hours of anguish, especially on Calvary; together pierced in Heart and Soul.

Jesus and Mary are always together in all the acts which effect and apply the Redemption. Mary has a most important part; not indispensable in it-

self, but according to Divine Economy; she is, therefore, with and after Jesus Christ, the author of our eternal salvation. "Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope: hail!"

In the Incarnation the Victim of the Sacrifice was prepared. St. Paul says: "Due to the insufficiency of the ancient rites, from the first moment of His coming into the world Jesus Christ said to His Eternal Father, 'Sacrifice and oblation, Thou wouldst not, but a body Thou hast fitted to Me'." (Heb. 10: 5.) With the first words the ancient victims are abrogated; with the last the new, holy Victim pleasing to God is substituted. But this victim was prepared with the participation of Mary's will and action.

Mary gave her consent with a free, loving and conscious act. She rendered possible the existence of Jesus, God-Man, and in consequence His redemptive work.

Behold the fact of the Annunciation: "Now in the sixth month the Angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And when the Angel had come to her, he said, 'Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women.' When she had heard him she was

troubled at his word, and kept pondering what manner of greeting this might be.

“And the Angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for thou has found grace with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a son; and thou shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of David His father, and He shall be king over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end.’

“But Mary said to the Angel, ‘How shall this happen, since I do not know man?’

“And the Angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; and therefore the Holy One to be born shall be called the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth thy kinswoman also has conceived a son in her old age, and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month; for nothing shall be impossible with God.’

“But Mary said, ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word.’ And the Angel departed from her.” (Luke 1: 26-38.)

Mary knew Who her Son was to be: the Son of the Most High, the pre-eminently Holy One, the Messiah, the Savior; the new King. It depended upon Mary to permit Him (the word is correct) to

come into the world and accomplish the mission entrusted to Him by the Father. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit respected her liberty.

We too are free to permit God to enter into our heart! Mary remained amazed, asked an explanation and then pronounced her "may it be done".

All our salvation depended, in a sense, on Mary. Let us listen to St. Bernard who speaks thus to Mary: "Behold to you is offered the price of our salvation. If you consent, we will immediately be liberated. We, made by the eternal Word, are dead in the soul: your yes can give us back life. Well then, mankind entreatingly asks you for this yes: Adam, Abraham, David, the Patriarchs, the entire human race await prostrate at your feet . . . do not delay, O Mary, to give your answer to the Angel. . . . All of us are waiting. The same King and Lord of the universe, in love with your beauty, solicits you by means of an Angel. Our salvation lies in your yes."

Even if Mary's work had terminated here, she would already be the Coredemptrix, the Apostle of the glory of God, of eternal salvation and of every good for mankind. But, we shall see her work continued and will continue until the fulfillment of the number of the elect.

Behold Mary: she unites the active life to the contemplative life! To the delights of the mystical union she unites the fatigue of many labors; she adds action to prayer. St. Paul says: "I will most gladly spend and be spent myself for your souls." (2 Cor. 12: 15.)

With contemplation the soul nourishes itself, but with the apostolate it gives itself. St. Thomas Aquinas says: "As it is greater to illuminate than to just burn, so it is greater to give to others the truths that have been contemplated than to just contemplate by oneself."

And here it is fitting to quote the thought of Father Matthew Crawley, the Apostle of the consecration of families to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It applies well to Mary: "The Apostle is a chalice full to the brim with the grace of Jesus Christ; the super-abundance is poured out on the souls. Mary's heart was full of God; she poured it out on mankind afflicted with the fever of vice. The excellence of Mary's ministry lies in the fact that she provided for everyone's health, without detriment, in fact, with benefit to her soul. It is well to carry the Most Holy Trinity in one's heart, but it is better to share it with our neighbor. The Priest at Mass is the ideal: he nourishes himself with God; then, without division of goods, he gives the fullness of this God in Holy Communion to each faithful."

Jesus Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and the Apostles have led both the contemplative and the active life, and without a doubt they chose the best way.

St. Peter Chrysologus says: "Have you heard, O brothers, how the Angel discussed with the woman the redemption of man. . . . It is because one day the devil discussed with Eve her own fall."

St. Thomas gives us the reason of convenience of Mary's Fiat: It treated of a kind of spiritual matrimony between human nature and divine nature in the unity of person: Mary gave the consent in the name of humanity.

Bossuet wrote: "The Incarnation of the Word and the redemption of man were consigned by God to Mary's free will. It would seem an exaggeration! Rather, the Angel should have announced God's command instead of asking and awaiting her consent. But it is God's way! He gave man intelligence and will. The commandments, the counsels, the duties of one's state do not suppress them; they ask, instead, the free cooperation of man to save himself.

In this way man can merit and win Heaven.

St. Ireneus points out: "As Eve, through disobedience, in which she also dragged Adam, ruined

the world; so Mary Most Holy, through her Fiat, which attracted the Son of God from Heaven, saved all mankind."

O Fiat: yes! of great glory to God!

O Fiat: yes! capable of destroying sin, overcoming the devil and reopening Heaven to souls.

O Fiat: yes! which opens Heaven and makes the Son of God descend! He lowers Himself, puts on human nature, and is born in order to die.

All the goods of grace, of sanctity, of truth, of glory, passed with Jesus Christ through Mary's hands. We owe all to Mary.

Mary was the way kept by God to come to us; she was the Mediatrix, she was the Mother of grace.

Using the words of Ecclesiasticus, (44: 25.), the Church sings of Mary: "The Lord gave Mary the blessing of all nations."

O Fiat: yes! which constitutes the first of the acts of Mary's apostolate. She introduces God the Savior of the world. What an apostolate! From then on Mary's life may be entitled: "Acts (works) of Mary's apostolate", but here is the first; the others are of the same nature: "coredemptive".

Mary is the Apostle! The Queen of the apostolate, the Queen of every Apostle.

This Fiat was the most perfect apostolate, the most conformed to the Divine Will, inspired with great love and great prudence.

Mary then placed herself at the service of humanity: holy joys, sorrows, trials, sufferings which were bound to this mission: she accepted all with her great soul.

O Fiat: yes! revealer of the heroism and of the spirit of the apostolate of Mary's Heart.

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How many times God asks our consent for some work of apostolate! The generous hearts are ready: "my heart is ready"; the indifferent hearts find excuses even where in reality there is only laziness, fear of fatigue, of humiliation, of sacrifice. Answer: "I am Thy servant, and the son of Thy handmaid." (Ps. 115: 16.) It is Mary's answer: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, may it be done unto me according to thy word." (Luke 1: 38.)

May our yes be prompt before each Divine Will: commandment, counsel, disposition of God. Always say yes! And when, at the point of death and on the threshold of eternity, we shall ask Jesus His permission to enter, He will answer us with a most amiable, eternal yes!

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Infuse, O Lord, Thy grace into our heart, so that, having known the Incarnation of Thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of the Angel, we may, through His Passion and Cross, arrive at the glory of the resurrection.

CHAPTER XI

THE APOSTOLATE OF ACTION:

Immolation of the Victim

Redemption signifies the disbursement of the price necessary to remove a person from a state of ignominy and restore him to his primary condition.

In the supernatural order, it is the reparation of the ruin brought about by original sin and augmented by personal sin.

Man came forth from the creative and sanctifying hands of God, radiant with beauty and ineffable greatness. Adam and Eve's sin wounded man in body and in soul. The Son of God came and restored to him the goods lost, by paying his debts with His Blood.

The Redemption was accomplished with every act of the Savior, but the following are especially to be considered: the Incarnation, the Presentation in the Temple, Calvary, the Mediation in Heaven, the new life in Jesus Christ, Way, Truth and Life.

Mary redeemed us through Jesus and in Jesus Christ by offering the Infant in the Temple forty days after His birth.

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To have introduced Jesus Host into the world was a great apostolate for Mary. But she did not stop here: she cooperated in His immolation in a preeminent way.

The immolation of a victim, that is, its destruction, is the essential part of the sacrifice and Jesus Christ offered Himself, accepting death, that is, His annihilation. How? With Mary's concurrence. Not only in the manner in which we assist at Mass, did Mary offer the Victim Who was also her Son. Jesus immolated Himself: "He offered Himself to God"; and Mary immolated Him.

The offering of Baby Jesus in the Temple and the Sacrifice of Calvary have an intimate connection as the preparation and the fulfillment.

The great Doctor and devotee of Mary, St. Alphonsus explains it well: "There were two precepts for the birth of the first-born: one regarded the mother and was the Purification. The second regarded the first-born and was the offering and ransoming of him. Besides the first precept, Mary also obeyed the second. She presented and offered her Son to the Eternal Father: 'They carried Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord'. (Luke 2:22.) But the Blessed Virgin offered the Son in a manner different from that of the other mothers. For the latter it was a matter of a legal ceremony; they

brought their children home again without the fear of having to then offer them in sacrifice as victims. Mary, instead really offered her Son to death, certain that the offering was accepted, that the ransom was only a ceremony, that one day her Son was to be immolated on the Cross in satisfaction to Divine Justice. The offering was, therefore, a pledge and an anticipation in regard to Calvary."

And Bossuet declares: "Entering the world with the Incarnation, the Son of God offered Himself victim in the secret of His Heart, but an offering, public and accepted by the Father was necessary". If we read well the tract of the Gospel which narrates the presentation of Jesus in the Temple, we shall see the Infant Who offers Himself to the Father and the Father Who places the Cross on His shoulders. We shall see Mary who offers Him and offers herself to accompany Him in the sacrifice, who feels the piercing of the sword that begins to penetrate her soul. This pain had to touch Mary, because the children belong to the parents by a natural right.

Simeon's words to Mary are clear: "Behold this Child is destined for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel and for a sign that shall be contradicted. And thy own soul a sword shall pierce, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed". (Luke 2: 34-35.)

And according to Bossuet, Mary's part was precisely that of ratifying the contract of the Passion of which these were also a figure and a preparation.

A day will come in which Mary's Son will not be placed by her into the arms of the inspired Simeon, but will be hung upon the arms of the Cross by the executioners, yet Mary Most Holy will still be there to offer Him: "There was standing by the cross of Jesus, Mary His Mother". And the Father still accepted Him: "He has not spared even His own Son but has delivered Him up for us". (Rom. 8: 32.) Both the Celestial Father and Mary agree to immolate their same Son, and the Son, lovingly abandoned in the hands of the Father exclaims: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit". (Luke 23: 46.) "And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit." (John 19: 30.)

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Do you want that your apostolate have a stable success? Do you want to produce fruit and do you will your fruit to remain? Enter with your whole being into the intimate meaning of the Consecration of the Mass. It is the renewal of the Passion and death of Jesus Christ; Mary is called to assist at it. "Having communion with and venerating the memory . . . first of the glorious Mary, ever a virgin."

Behold the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, from the offering in the Temple, to Calvary and to the de-

position from the Cross, united in the sacrifice of immolation for the salvation of the world.

The visit to the Most Blessed Sacrament, the Holy Mass with a fervent Holy Communion, make the soul which lives her Eucharistic life. They make the soul which immolates everything in the course of life, for souls.

The fecundity of the apostolate corresponds to the degree of the Eucharistic life acquired; on condition that it be in imitation of Jesus, Priest and Host. In fact, what is the fruit and the real and concrete end of a true apostolate? To bring the faithful to the Eucharistic table, even though by different means. The other successes are more illusions than apostolate. The result is obtained only in the measure in which we are Eucharistic souls.

To deify men: St. Augustine says that: "Jesus Christ became man to make of man a God." "Wishing to make us participants of His divinity, the Only-Begotten assumed our human nature in order to destroy man" (St. Thomas). In the Eucharist, or better still, in the perfect interior life, the apostle assimilates the divine life. "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has life everlasting." (John 6: 55.)

Holy Communion, the Mass, the Real Presence are all centers of activity, the heart of every devo-

tion, the secret of every apostolate truly useful to the Church. And whoever wishes to vivify souls, not just make a show, will find the way here: "I am the Way".

There is a profound plan in the fact that Jesus Christ, after the Last Supper, in the parable of the vine and the branches, developed with insistence and precision, the uselessness of an action deprived of interior life: "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it remain on the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me." (John 15: 4.) And immediately afterwards He shows how valuable, instead, is the action done by the apostle who lives of the Eucharist. "He who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit." (John 15: 5.) These and only these will bear much fruit. St. Athanasius writes: "By nourishing ourselves with the flesh of Jesus Christ we become so many gods". What warmth, and what irradiation of the divine emanates from a heart that is often in contact with God, in fact, penetrated by the divine life! Whether it be a Priest or a layman, working in a school, in a hospital, association or anywhere else his word will be ardent: "My words are spirit and life". Without this they are words, rhetorical figures, empty phrases; they might win applause, but they will not save souls.

The Holy Eucharist uplifts one from a miserable life, it nourishes, repairs, augments and gives joy to life.

Furthermore, today this assiduous communication with God is even more necessary: to resist evil; to pass through so much mire without soiling oneself; to be good, wholesome Catholics, to become apostles.

CHAPTER XII

THE APOSTOLATE OF ACTION:

The Coredemptrix

The Mass is the holy sacrifice of the Cross brought to our altars. Every morning we go to Calvary to contemplate the Crucifix and the Sorrowful Mother, to participate in the fruits of the Redemption. The Mass is the great apostolate of loving hearts because it gives honor and thanks to God: obtains mercy and grace for mankind.

In the Mass we are not simple spectators but actors. In it, with Mary, we sacrifice and immolate Jesus in so far as He belongs to us.

Let us consider Mary, our Coredemptrix and Reparatrix. Mary supplied the Redeemer with the flesh and blood with which the Victim of our salvation would be prepared. Moreover: she guarded, nourished and at the proper time offered Jesus, with her true consent, on the altar of the Cross.

Just as in Gethsemani Jesus consented to be immolated, so Mary gave her consent to the immolation and, as far as it depended upon her, immolated her Son. It was a different type of consent, but similar to that given for the Incarnation.

The union of the will, of intention and of pain was never broken between Mother and Son during life; and much less was it broken on Calvary: when Jesus was crucified and Mary stood at the foot of the Cross. Because of this union of sorrow, of will and of intention between Mary and Jesus Christ, Mary became our Reparatrix and Core-demptrix and the Dispenser of the fruits of the Cross. The Redeemer is Jesus Christ alone. Mary concurred in the Redemption and she cooperated by means of Jesus Christ and with Jesus Christ. Jesus is the principal Mediator, through office; Mary is the secondary Redemptrix and associated to the great work through divine disposition.

Mary is not the fount of grace: God alone is; but the Blessed Virgin, united to Jesus Christ, merited grace for us through congruity; Jesus Christ through dignity.

Mary Most Holy was associated to Jesus Christ in the redemption of humanity. In general we may say that Mary redeemed us in the manner in which Jesus Christ redeemed us. Jesus did so through His Passion; Mary, through her compassion, that is through sufferings united to those of Jesus.

On the one hand Jesus and Mary suffered a complexity of pains; on the other they did so for obedience to the Father and for charity toward souls. Mary's compassion is not reduced to the last

act or epilogue of suffering on Calvary, but began on the day of the Annunciation, when she consented to become the Mother of the Redeemer. She was not accepting a common motherhood, but the motherhood of Him Who made Himself man to die for the redemption of sinful humanity. Her compassion is not a simple, commiserative affection as was true of St. John and the Pious Women who were at the foot of the Cross with Mary. This compassion of St. John and the Pious Women is not even a simple and personal common pain, although in different degrees. Mary's compassion, instead, indicates that complexity of sorrows which, in the Passion of Jesus Christ and with Him, she endured for the redemption and salvation of men as Coredemptrix in the great work. This compassion of Mary is something personal and all her very own.

The Popes speak: Pope Pius IX says that Mary, together with her Son and through her Son overcame the devil.

Pope Leo XIII affirms that Mary's merits for our redemption shine forth in the mysteries of the Rosary: let us meditate the singular merits with which she with her Son participated in the salvation of mankind. She was not only present, but actively participated, so that she is really the Coredemptrix.

Pope St. Pius X teaches that: "Mary merited to be the Reparatrix or Coredemptrix of fallen humanity because she had an uninterrupted participation in the labors and sorrows of her Son; Jesus having associated her to His great redeeming mission".

His Holiness Pope Benedict XV writes: "Mary, insofar as it concerned her, so immolated her Son in order to satisfy divine justice for the debts of mankind, that it can be said that she, with her Son, redeemed the world". And in consequence (of having redeemed the world with Christ), the graces which came to us from the Redemption are administered and distributed, so to say, by the hands of the Sorrowful Mary.

Pope Pius XI: "The Sorrowful Virgin participated and cooperated in the work of Jesus the Redeemer; and so through an ineffable union with Christ, and through her singular grace, Mary is said to be and is truly the Reparatrix; and the graces which come to us are the fruit of Mary's compassion as well as Christ's Passion."

No one can be astonished by such teachings by the latest Pontiffs if one stops to think that this was the announcement God gave to guilty Adam and Eve; "I will put enmities between thee (the devil) and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head". (Gen. 13: 15.)

The Redemption, then, will be a revenge over the devil; and the revenge will come about through the Woman and her Son.

The Holy Fathers see in this passage of Genesis the Redeemer and His Most Holy Mother foretold; in fact, they find declared the enmity or struggle of Jesus and Mary against the demon. They see how the devil was overcome through the crushing of the head, and how this came about through the common work of Jesus and Mary Who work together, according to the admirable Providence of God.

Hence St. Alphonsus says: "Just as the Eternal Father did not will that His divine Word should become Mary's Son before she accepted with her express consent, so also He did not will that Jesus should sacrifice His life for the salvation of mankind, without the cooperation again of Mary's consent, so that together with the sacrifice of the life of the Son there should also be sacrificed the Mother's Heart. . . . Hence, Mary for the great merit that she acquired in this immense sacrifice which she offered to God for the salvation of the world, is justly called by St. Augustine the **Reparatrix** of the human race. . . . God disposed that Mary should cooperate in our salvation and thus become the Mother of our souls."

Two altars are to be contemplated on Calvary: one is the body of Jesus; the other is Mary's Heart. Jesus immolated His own flesh, Mary immolated her own Soul.

Jesus and Mary are there: they are snatching from the devil his prey in order to restore grace and the right to Heaven to us. Each one is in his own position, but the work is in common, the intentions are in common, the fruit is in common. How deeply the sword has pierced Mary's Soul! O, Most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, united in the same Passion, we love You, we thank You, we unite ourselves to Your sufferings, make us more profound contemplators of Your love and of Your sorrow in the Holy Mass! That is where apostolic souls meet every morning. Without the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass there is nothing; the sun is extinguished. From the Mass and with the Mass one has everything: heat, light, life. Devotion to the Mass signifies the lighting of the spiritual sun for the world.

God so loved the world, that He gave His Son.

The Son so loved the world that He gave Himself.

Mary so loved the world, that she gave her Son.

The Mass is the renewal of the sacrifice of the Cross. Devotion to the Mass is a very special apostolate. Celebrate the Mass, have Masses said, assist at Mass, cooperate in this directly or indirectly. It

is Jesus' and Mary's Calvary. What was done on Calvary is all renewed at Mass.

The Mass has such copious fruits that through the Mass one works in width, height, length and depth impossible to be measured completely. It is helpful to keep the fruits of the Mass present.

Most general fruit: It gives an immense glory to the August Trinity. It gives goods to all men either already blessed, or living here on earth, or in Purgatory where they are fulfilling the last preparations for Heaven.

General fruit: For those who are present, for those who serve or sing the Mass, for those who help the Priest; for those who prepare the Priest with moral and material help, for those who provide the church, the altar, the furniture, wine, candles, hosts, and so on.

Special fruit: For those who have the Mass celebrated and for those to whom the Mass is applied.

Very special fruit: Reserved to the celebrating Priest.

Then there are the ends of the Mass: The Mass is a great **Gloria in excelsis Deo**; and at the same time a great peace to men for those who have good will. It gives glory and a worthy thanksgiving to God because they are presented in Christ, for Christ and with Christ.

For mankind the Mass is an overabundant satisfaction and petition; in conformity to their needs and dispositions.

While preparing for Holy Mass it is spiritually helpful to keep company with the Sorrowful Mary and with Jesus carrying the Cross toward Calvary.

The Holy Mass is the school of the apostle, the way of the apostle, the life of the apostle. In fact, the Mass is divided into three parts: the first is instructive and of great light for the apostolate; it extends from the beginning of the Mass to the Offertory excluded. The second constitutes the sacrifice and teaches how to be zealous for the glory of God and the salvation of souls; it is sacrificial: it begins at the Offertory and ends at the Pater Noster. The third is the consummative and unitive part; Jesus is the life and the strength of the apostle: in Holy Communion He unites Himself to the apostle. The third part goes from the Pater Noster to the Communion.

Let us participate in the Holy Mass by meditating on the Passion, or by following the sacred liturgy or with any other method. The more we enter into the spirit of Jesus, the Redeemer, and of Mary, the Coredemptrix, the greater will be the fruit of the Holy Mass.

CHAPTER XIII

FAITH: FIRST FOUNDATION OF ZEAL

The first basis of the apostolate is a lively faith. The second is to feel with the Church. The third is love for God and for souls.

In a word: one is as much an apostle as he is catholic. The means for exercising the apostolate may be only through prayer, as, for example, for the Trappist. It may be through preaching, as for the holy preacher. But the apostolic soul is a soul profoundly catholic. Faith kindles the flame of zeal; the heart puts all the energies into action.

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Speaking of the Protomartyrs of North America, Father Jogues and the two laymen, Lalande (a doctor) and Goupil (a carpenter), Pope Pius XII says that "they were moved by the same love of God and of souls". Similar, also, was their temperament for their disinterested courage; and their aspirations were directed toward the same high ideals of sacrifice and dedication for the cause of the Heart of Christ. They did not want to go to Heaven alone. Their faith was too precious a gift for them not to desire to share it with others. On the

other hand, the sentiment of being catholic would have been incomplete in them if it had not made them conscious of a debt toward all the people of the world. They knew that the missionary spirit is not a superfluous virtue, obligatory for only a few elect souls: the missionary spirit and the catholic spirit are one and the same thing. Catholicity is an essential mark of the true Church; and no one can claim to participate in the Church and to be devoted to the Church if he does not participate in and is not devoted to the universality of the Church: that is, in her taking root and flourishing throughout the world. Those two laymen, as well as their guide, the Priest, could not find rest at the thought that millions of men did not yet know Christ. "... Inflamed with the love of God and of souls, their message of missionary zeal resounds at this time even more loudly and insistently, while the war and the after-effects have thinned the ranks of the missionaries and impoverished the sources of missionary cooperation."

St. Theresa of Lisieux had a missionary soul. On earth she was a missionary by her prayers and sufferings; she is a missionary in Heaven, from where she lets fall a shower of roses upon all the work of the missionaries; she is a missionary in the Church, since she was elected, with St. Francis Xavier, Protectress of the Missions.

Mary had the most lively faith: in the Angel's words, in praying, in the triduum of Jesus Christ's death.

The Angel Gabriel brought Mary the announcement of the Incarnation and the proposition of divine Motherhood. According to St. Thomas, Mary expressed a thought of wonderment to the Angel: "How shall this happen, since I do not know man?" (Luke 1: 34.) In other words, she asked for an explanation on how this proposition could be realized, not seeing how virginity and motherhood could be reconciled. But her faith did not waver for an instant: it was prompt and complete. When, in fact, she met St. Elizabeth, the latter, through divine inspiration said to her: "Blessed is she who has believed, because the things promised her by the Lord shall be accomplished". (Luke 1: 45.) Zachary had doubted; hence he had become dumb. Mary believed, she yielded to the words of the Angel: Blessed faith! It is faith that accomplishes prodigies. At that moment the Son of God became Incarnate in her womb.

Mary lived of faith every moment of her life. From Nazareth she went to Bethlehem to give her name for the census. Baby Jesus was sought to be killed, and with Him Mary had to go into exile. Following the advice given by the Angel to St. Joseph, she returned to Palestine and with Him es-

tablished herself in Nazareth. At the wedding feast at Cana, she prayed Jesus to help the young couple who had remained without wine. Jesus seems to deprive her of every hope with a plainly negative answer, but she acts as though the grace were already granted and she obtained it.

Jesus took leave of Mary in order to begin His public ministry. From that day, as previously she had contemplated Him as her divine and obedient Son, so now she considers Him the Master Whom she venerates, follows, listens to. She had great faith in every step of Jesus' private and public life. He appears a common man: born in a very poor stable; He flees from those who seek to put Him to death as though unable to defend Himself; He is nourished with Mary's milk, and dressed with the poor clothes she gave Him; He permits Himself to be taught by Mary, guided by her in prayer, taught how to do the various chores about the house, how to perform the various acts of virtue. From St. Joseph Jesus learns how to plane, to saw, to make pieces of furniture; He does not show Himself to be any different from the most common man of that country. Like them, He dresses poorly, works and earns His living... here His divinity is entirely hidden, as it is in the Eucharist in which we only see a bit of bread. Yet Mary acted toward Him as with God. She was His custodian as the Priest is

the Eucharist's custodian. She adored, learned, admired. Although still a Child, Jesus' words for her were the words of Uncreated Wisdom. The Gospel says that having found Jesus in the Temple, Mary kept all His words in her Heart and meditated upon them (Luke 2: 15.), because she knew Who was beneath that simple figure of a man. She knew how He had prodigiously made Himself man in her; how He was born respecting her virginity; how the Angels sang the celestial "Gloria" at His birth; how miraculously the shepherds and the Magi had been called to His crib to adore Him. She had heard Simeon in the Temple say: "My eyes have seen the Savior". Mary never doubted: "Virgin Most Faithful". She read the Scriptures, considered what these predicted of Him, and awaited the fulfillment. She regarded Him as the Savior of the world even though His life of a simple worker did not show Him as such in the eyes of the world.

Mary's faith was outstanding especially during the Passion of her Son. Here Jesus appeared as the vanquished; the opprobrium of men; a crucified malefactor. Mary's faith did not weaken, notwithstanding the flight of the Apostles; in fact, she then grew more heroic.

She received Jesus' body in her arms when He was taken down from the Cross; she helped to

embalm Him and accompanied Him to the sepulchre. Then she retired in silence, in prayer, in certain expectation of His Resurrection.



"Lord, increase our faith." A weak faith, religious ignorance, errors about the doctrine of the Church, will never produce an apostolic heart. An ardent, illuminated and right faith creates apostles. At first Paul had persecuted the Church, but when Jesus illuminated him, he believed: from that moment on he felt an irresistible desire to make the Church the queen of the world. And behold, he travels from place to place, speaks and writes, exhorts and threatens, suffers and gives his life. "What is lacking of the sufferings of Christ I fill up in my flesh for His body which is the Church; whose minister I have become in virtue of the office that God has given me. . . . For I am to preach the word of God fully: the mystery which has been hidden for ages and generations, but now is clearly shown to His saints." (Col. 1: 24-26.)

That the Church of Christ may rise, progress, prosper: is not this the goal of history? Prophet or Evangelist, shepherd of souls or teacher, fathers of families or soldiers, simple Christians or religious . . . all are workers assigned to the construction of the great edifice: "in the construction of the body of



**“He who wishes to find Jesus will do so
only by having recourse to Mary.”**

St. Alphonsus.

Christ". Paul is right. Let the strong and tenacious powers work. "For from Him the whole body (being closely joined and knit together through every joint of the system according to the functioning in due measure of each single part) derives its increase to the building up of itself in love." (Eph. 4: 16.)

The catechism should be studied, sermons attended, good books and periodicals read and the means for religious instructions augmented. The heart must be kept pure; persons, things, conversations and literature which are contrary to the Church are to be avoided. Above all, one must pray, since faith is infused in the heart by the Holy Spirit. . . . The riches of an exuberant faith tend to diffuse themselves. One speaks of, defends and propagates that which fills his heart: "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks". (Matt. 12: 34.) Why is not God and His Kingdom sought? "God is not known, God is not sought".

As soon as Paul received the ineffable gift of faith, "Straightway he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God". Note: straightway: And nothing stopped him along the ways of the world.

Faith makes the apostle.

Generosity is St. Paul's characteristic. "The charity of Christ urges us on."

His spirit of generosity rendered him worthy to be chosen by Jesus Christ as "a chosen vessel . . . to carry My Name among nations and kings and the children of Israel." (Acts 9: 15.)

Because of the sublimity of his thoughts he was elevated to hear secret words that man may not repeat. (2 Cor. 12: 4.)

For his doctrine, he is the greatest interpreter of Jesus Christ and the first theologian of the New Testament. He himself writes: "Even though I be rude in speech, yet I am not so in knowledge; but in every way we have made ourselves clear to you". (2 Cor. 11: 6.)

His generosity is seen in his labors and in his sufferings for the reign of Christ. He writes to the Corinthians: "In no way have I fallen short of the most eminent apostles, even though I am nothing. Indeed, the signs of the apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in miracles and wonders and deeds of power." (2 Cor. 12: 11-12.)

Referring to other disturbing ministers he says: "Are they ministers of Christ? I—to speak as a fool—am more: in many more labors, in prisons more frequently, in lashes above measure, often exposed to death". (2 Cor. 11:23.) "Wherefore I am satisfied, for Christ's sake, with infirmities, with insults, with

hardships, with persecutions, with distresses. For when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Cor. 12: 10.) Therefore he was similar to Jesus Christ in doctrine, in sentiments, in his afflicted life spent entirely for the Church and for souls. In order to work in the apostolate it is necessary to reform ourselves interiorly.

CHAPTER XIV

MARY'S HEART

The faith which precedes charity and the charity which follows faith make the apostle.

Why is Mary Most Holy the Apostle?

Because she has a Heart made to the image and likeness of the Heart of the Father.

Because her Heart is the Heart of Jesus.

Because the Holy Spirit has infused in it true piety, goodness and charity. The apostolate is born from the heart.

And behold Mary's Heart that has so loved God and mankind.

a) The true love of God can never be separated from the true love of neighbor: it is one fire with two flames. Or, it is one flame which, inasmuch as it rises toward Heaven, is called love of God, and inasmuch as it diffuses its heat around itself it is called love of neighbor. Go, kindle, heat: the environment, the school, the family, society, all. He who loves gives what he can, even that which is dearest to him, even himself. God is love: true religion is to imitate Him. Christianity is essentially apostolic, unreserved, vital, productive, because it

is the life of God in us. Let us learn from God. How did the Celestial Father love? He loved the Son, His perfect image . . . but He also loved man; and to what degree? "God so loved the world that He gave His only Son".

And the Son so loved man as to die for man and give him His wisdom, His sanctity, the Church, the Sacraments, the Eucharist and His Most Holy Mother.

b) Imitate God.

"Religion pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to give aid to orphans and widows in their tribulation, and to keep oneself unspotted from this world." (James 1: 27.)

First give the spiritual goods as the Father and the Son did; then give the natural goods.

But, if one does not love, how can one be a child of God?

And, if all the precepts were observed, but charity were offended, how pleasing would your gift be to God? "Go first to be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." (Matt. 5: 24.) He who does not have charity and does not use mercy, must expect a severe judgment. Faith is not sufficient; without good works it is dead.

"And if a brother or a sister be naked and in want of daily food, and one of you say to them, 'Go

in peace, be warmed and filled', yet you do not give them what is necessary for the body, what does it profit?" (James 2: 14-16.)

As the body without the soul is dead, so faith without works is dead.

Let us love, therefore, not with words but with works and in truth.

To cry about evil in a sterile way, without working with ardor and zeal signifies increasing the evils.

We must love "works and truth". From the fruits we know the tree. The degree of love of God in a soul is known from her works of zeal. The love of neighbor made up of good works is the touchstone and gauge of the love of God. Jesus Himself took up the duty of giving us an explanation when the Doctor of the Law, seeking justification, asked: "Who is my neighbor?" "And behold, a certain lawyer got up to test Him saying, 'Master, what must I do to gain eternal life?' But He said to him, 'What is written in the Law? How dost thou read?' He answered and said, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength, and with thy whole mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.' And He said to him, 'Thou hast answered rightly; do this and thou shalt live.' But he, wishing to justify himself, said to Jesus, 'And who is my neighbor?'

“Jesus answered, ‘A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell in with robbers, who after both stripping him and beating him went their way, leaving him half-dead. But, as it happened, a certain priest was going down the same way, and when he saw him, he passed by. And likewise a Levite also, when he was near the place and saw him, passed by. But a certain Samaritan as he journeyed came upon him, and seeing him, was moved with compassion. And he went up to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. And setting him on his own beast, he brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more thou spendest, I, on my way back, will repay thee.’

“Which of these three, in thy opinion, proved himself neighbor to him who fell among the robbers?’ And he said, ‘He who took pity on him.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Go and do also in like manner.’” (Luke 10: 25-34.)

The mission of love of the Son of God made man is represented in this parable: love made up of works and of immolation.

The man who fell into the hands of the robbers is mankind who was the victim of the devil; stripped of its supernatural goods, deteriorated in its nat-

ural goods. The old Sacrifice and the Law could not restore humanity. But the Son of God, represented in the Samaritan, having taken flesh, bent over the injured and stripped man, medicated him with His grace, then He consigned him to the Church so that She should care for him and restore him to complete health.

A similar apostolate is that of the Priest and of the true Christian.

c) On the other hand it could not be otherwise: goodness tends to diffuse itself. It is precisely of divine nature to be liberal. God is infinite goodness, hence He always tends to give Himself.

The earthly life of the Incarnate Son of God illustrates this. Jesus passed dispensing goods of every kind and curing many infirmities. He is the Good Shepherd Who seeks the lost sheep; He is the Savior represented by the woman who does all in her power to find the lost drachma, He is the Father Who awaits and embraces the prodigal son, He is the Redeemer Who gives His life.

Jesus Christ has communicated this apostolic flame to the Church, gift of His love, diffusion of His life, manifestation of His truth, splendor of His sanctity. The mystical spouse of Christ is animated by the same fire. She continues in the course of the centuries the work of the apostolate of her Divine Founder. The Apostles "went forth and

preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the preaching by the signs that followed." (Mark 16: 20.)

They became all things to all men, that they might save all. (1 Cor. 9: 22.)

Admirable commerce, that is all divine! Pope Leo XIII says that man, by means of man, will learn the way of salvation. Jesus Christ willed to associate to Himself cooperators, dispensers of His treasures. They are the Priests and Bishops, a marvelous legion in which holy Pontiffs, missionaries and Priests stand out.

But, in addition to these, all the Christians have a part in the apostolate. Close to the official clergy, from the very origin of the Church, companies of volunteers, true and select corps, were formed. Of these we have had a perennial and vigorous growth; proof of the always young vitality of the Church.

Hence in every age there have been men of action, fervent Catholics, with ardent hearts; they formed a blockade against the forces of evil, or accomplished a work of penetration into the masses. They were the leaven in the dough, the salt that preserved. Although not ordained, not part of the hierarchy, they gave a marvelous and comforting spectacle. It was a flowering of works, born at the opportune moment, always adopted to the needs.

St. Peter (1 Peter 2) exhorts the Christians so that, having laid aside all malice, and all deceit, and pretense, and envy, and all slander . . . they would act as the chosen race, the royal priesthood, the purchased people, in order to proclaim the perfections of Him Who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

In regards to the apostolate of the laity, St. Paul writes: "I entreat Evodia and I exhort Syntyche to be of one mind in the Lord. And I beseech thee also, my loyal comrade, help them, for they have toiled with me in the Gospel, as have Clement and the rest of my fellow-workers whose names are in the book of life." (Phil. 4: 2.)

To the Romans he writes: "I commend to you Phoebe, our sister, who is in the ministry of the church at Cenchrae . . . for she has assisted many, including myself." (Rom. 16: 1.) The office of the deaconess was to instruct and help the poor, the sick, the women catechumens: have care of sacred places, assist the women, be present at their Baptism and other similar services.

In other passages, St. Paul remembers Prisca and Aquila as his cooperators in Christ. They worked actively and had sustained frequent persecutions. Both had also exposed their life for St. Paul. They merited not only the Apostle's gratitude, but also that of all the churches of the Gentiles.

The apostolate of the laity appears to be even more useful and necessary today, according to the words of Pius XI and Pius XII. When it is organized it is called Catholic Action. Pope Pius XI said, "This is not a novelty of today: the Apostles, in order to accomplish their work during their journeys in the work of the first churches, always had help from the laity: men and women, soldiers and merchants, magistrates and children".

Today there is the apostolate of interior life, of good example, of prayer, of word, of deeds. . . . The apostolate can be exercised in the Church, in the missions, in the attic, in the prisons, in the offices and factories. Literature, the screen, the radio; youths, men, women; sinners, Sisters, collegians; the seven corporal works of mercy; the Catechism, conferences, exhortations—what magnificent fields are blossoming! Go out into the fields. Pray God to send good laborers.

"If I should speak with the tongues of men and of Angels, but do not have charity, I have become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." (1 Cor. 13: 1.)

But how is this love of God revealed? By one's goodness toward one's neighbor: "Charity is patient, is kind; charity does not envy, is not pretentious, is not puffed up, is not ambitious, is not self-seeking, is not provoked; thinks no evil, does not

rejoice over wickedness, . . . bears with all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." (1 Cor. 13: 4-7.)

Bossuet says: "Don't tell me that those are pious souls . . . that their heart is similar to God's . . . God is a lover of souls . . . God gives, God gave His only Son; and the Son gave Himself entirely. And if the piety of certain persons does not lead them to imitate God, how can it be given the name of piety?"

The loving heart feels the divine thirst for souls, for the Crucifix. Piety towards God is always united to piety toward one's neighbor.

CHAPTER XV

FIRST END OF THE APOSTOLATE: THE GLORY OF GOD

The apostle has two ends: the glory of God and peace to men.

This is the program of the Incarnate Son of God. He had the Angels, who understood Him well, sing: "Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will". And the Church has placed it in the sacred liturgy followed by a kind of comment for our greater knowledge: "We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we adore Thee, we glorify Thee; we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory. O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father almighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father. Thou Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Thou Who takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou Who sittest at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For Thou only art holy. Thou only, O Jesus Christ, art most high. With the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father."

These two aspirations were never so lively either in any Angel or Saint as in the Most Holy Virgin Mary, after Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Apostle; Mary is the Apostle or Co-Apostle. Each one in his own position, but united in the same end.

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Zeal is the perfume of love. The apostolic soul loves God above everything: hence she wants, seeks and procures God's glory.

This soul loves herself in the first place; therefore she has good will to save and sanctify herself.

She will love her neighbor as herself; hence she wants, seeks and procures his peace: peace which is friendship with God, charity with her neighbor and a good conscience in herself.

St. Thomas says: "Zeal proceeds from the intensity of love". Hence common is the saying: "He who does not love does not have zeal"; or "He who does not have zeal does not love".

In zeal there are two different sentiments: resistance and action.

One resists evil; one acts to attain good.

When some evil threatens us or when someone opposes our desires, then we fight. When a person desires to remove us from a position or a primacy, the zeal of envy or jealousy is excited: "Zeal of envy"; in this sense God declares Himself jeal-

ous: "The Lord His Name is Jealous" (Ex. 34: 14.) because He does not want to nor can renounce His glory: "I will not give My glory to another". (Isa. 42: 8.) And if someone contends for it, He resists: "God resists the proud". (James 4: 6.)

Thus the zeal for one's friend is explained. We defend him against evil as we would defend ourselves. From this we can understand Jesus' zeal when He saw the Temple of God, His Father, profaned; He cast out those unworthy people from the house of God. The Psalmist had predicted it: "The zeal of Thy house has eaten Me up". (Ps. 68: 10.)

Furthermore: there is the action for the good of the one loved. Philosophers and theologians agree in saying that real love consists in "desiring good". There is an egoistical love of which St. Augustine sarcastically writes: "We must not love men as we hear gluttons say: 'I love birds'. Because they love them, they kill them and eat them. Whereas true love gives itself, provides for the good of the loved one, and in certain cases even sacrifices its life. An affectionate son, instead, loves his mother and wants that which is pleasing to her.

Neither can love consist in a sterility of sentiments and desires. It will be, instead, operative, active, donative. Of what value would it be to say: "I love you", if then nothing else is done about it?

St. John admonishes: "Let us not love in word, neither with the tongue, but in deed and in truth". (1 John 3: 18.)

Can we desire some good to God while He is infinite? . . . We can desire extrinsic glory for Him and desire it always more. Live: "For the greater glory of God": behold the first flame of our love; it rises towards God and generates the first zeal: love of God. It unites us and makes ours the desires of God, Who "created all for His own glory", and of man: "I created him for My glory". Behold how benevolence becomes beneficence: "Behold how by loving we desire to do good". (St. Thomas.) Behold the "Glory in the Highest".

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The Magnificat echoes, explains and comments on the singing of the Angels. The Most Blessed Virgin had gone to visit St. Elizabeth:

"Now in those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town of Juda. And she entered the house of Zachary and saluted Elizabeth. And it came to pass, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe in her womb leapt. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of

thy womb! And how have I deserved that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, the moment that the sound of thy greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who has believed, because the things promised her by the Lord shall be accomplished.'

"And Mary said, 'My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; because He has regarded the lowliness of His handmaid; for, behold, henceforth all generations shall call me blessed; because He Who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His Name. And for generation upon generation is His mercy, to those that fear Him. He has shown might with His arm, He has scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart. He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and has exalted the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty. He has given help to Israel, His servant, mindful of His mercy—even as He spoke to our fathers—to Abraham and to his posterity forever.' (Luke 1: 39-55.)

"The Church of Jesus Christ is similar to a radio which transmits from century to century, from country to country, the hymn of the Blessed Virgin. As it is said of the Apostles: 'Their word resounded all over the earth', so can it be said of Mary: At all times and everywhere Mary's melodious hymn

resounds. In fact, it reverberates for all eternity in Heaven." (Doctor Erasmus, P.S.M.)

Bossuet says that the notes of this hymn are, in the first place, transports of an ardent soul, then the sweet diffusion of peace and joy.

Cornelius A. Lapide tells us that this hymn is the most beautiful of all the canticles of the Sacred Scriptures.

St. Bernard exclaims: "The Magnificat is the ecstasy of Mary's humility". It is an incense which burns and rises from Mary's ardent Heart.

The Church has inserted it in all the Vespers of the year; and she takes some of its verses for other liturgical uses.

Entire books are written commenting on the Magnificat.

"It constitutes in the Church a Marian apostolate, joyful, universal of praise, adoration and thanksgiving of the creature to her God: the Principle of all good, sole object of love, desire and hope of the humble and of the weak".

Mary is praised, but she refers all honor to God alone.

Mary exalts in her spirit for the Savior Whom she carries with herself, as in a ciborium, to Whom she attributes every gift because: "He rested His eye on the littleness of His handmaid". She realizes that the future generations, astonished by such

great wealth of gifts, will call her blessed and will glorify the holy Name of God.

Mary foresees what will be accomplished by the blessed fruit of her womb, Jesus: His mercy will continue throughout the centuries for those who fear sin. This Jesus will be for all: light, peace reconciliation. Men, however, must render themselves capable of receiving the goods which He brings from Heaven. Hence now, as of old, the humble will receive and be filled, the proud will remain empty-handed.

God has kept the promises made to Abraham and the Patriarchs to send the **Blessed** in benediction to all mankind, having had pity on His people.

The Church adds the conclusion which comes spontaneously: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.

A soul has as much **true** zeal as her care to save and sanctify herself: her zeal will be as constant as her love of God; the fruit will be as wise and copious as her aim for God's greater glory; and the works of zeal will have as much vitality and stability as the amount of grace she has.

Jesus prays and says: "Father, I have glorified Thee". True zeal seeks to glorify God, as Jesus Christ did.

Jesus Christ not only is the Truth, but also the Way and the Life of the Apostolate.

To bring souls on the road to Christ: "to know, serve and love God" is to glorify God.

He who feels the **Our Father**, aims for the glory of God. The **Our Father** is the prayer-comment of the "Glory to God in the Highest", in the first three requests; and of "Peace to men of good will" in the remaining four. It is the prayer which is most similar to the **Magnificat**.

It is the most suitable prayer for the apostolic soul.

It is the best missionary prayer.

Mary **magnifies, makes God great**; not in Himself, but in His manifestation, in His extrinsic glory.

Mary makes God great and she declares it. In fact, she rendered visible the invisible divinity; she gave to the Son of God a body which He did not have before; she rendered Him the Savior for mankind; she made Him the Apostle of the Father, the Priest and Host, the Teacher authenticated by the Father. Through Mary, a worthy sacrifice of praise and of love is given to the Father in perpetuity. God was never so known, loved, adored, as after Jesus Christ: "I manifested Thy Name to the men. . . ." (John 17: 6.) He revealed His greatness, beauty, goodness, promises, providence and reward.

Let us ask ourselves: Is our heart patterned after the Heart of Mary? Is it made according to

the Heart of Jesus Christ? Does it have the same intentions, aims, aspirations? Everything, only and always, for the greater glory of God?

Mary's canticle is also a canticle of joy: not a worldly joy, but the purest joy, because God is glorified; the Son of God became man.

"Rejoice . . . I repeat: rejoice." "Rejoice in the Lord and diffuse your joy in hymns, psalms, canticles; singing hymns, always thanking the celestial Father."

Glorify God. Assist at the beautiful functions: Mass, Vespers, processions, etc., these are a **Te Deum** in various forms; the Praises are found in the **Breviary**.

Prayer, in general, is divided into four kinds; two are: adoration and thanksgiving. The other two are: satisfaction for having taken some glory away from God by sin; petition, so that we may serve and love God. He who learns how to pray in Mary, will pray in holy joy: Cause of our joy. St. Bernard says: "Every time I think of Mary, I feel in my heart a joy which exceeds all happiness, a pleasure which covers all sorrow".

Praise, adoration, thanksgiving, reparation, the offering of one's heart, acts of charity, and so on, are so many manifestations of the zeal of God: "I had the zeal of God".

XVI

SECOND END OF THE APOSTOLATE: PEACE TO MAN

The second commandment is similar to the first: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself". (Matt. 22: 39.) First we must love ourself. It is a love that is so much of the same nature, that it was not necessary to make an explicit precept for it; it precedes. Love of one's neighbor is not commanded to be equal, but that it be modeled after the love toward ourself. In such a way that it will make us do that which we would reasonably want others to do for us; and avoid that which we would reasonably not want for us.

St. Augustine warns: "Having been won by Jesus Christ, we must win other souls". And, to react against innate egoism, he said: "Those who tend the sheep of Christ should not be lovers of themselves and should not tend them as their own sheep, but as Jesus Christ's sheep".

To love one's neighbor means to wish him well (benevolence); to do good to him (beneficence); to be pleased with his good (complaisance); to will-

ingly stay in his company (to live together in a religious congregation, family, society).

To want and to do good to one's neighbor; as much as is possible, that which is possible, to whom it is possible, when it is possible.

To do good, not evil, such as would be scandal, calumny, theft.

As much as possible; since there is a great difference between a rich man and a poor working man, the head of a family; between a literary genius who can write a great deal, and a simple kindergarten teacher.

That which is possible: perhaps prayer, service, example; according to the circumstances of time, place or person.

To whom it is possible: to the child the catechism, to the infirm the Sacraments, to our intimate friends edification.

When it is possible: take the occasions and the opportunities—for the immigrant, the sick, the orphan, during afflictions, in cold weather, in youth.

To be pleased with the good and to get along with those who live with us are of extreme importance; these will be considered more extensively later on.

To give temporal goods is corporal mercy. Here we are speaking especially about spiritual goods: instructions, good examples, the Sacra-

ments, comfort, spiritual direction, forgiveness, help, grace, Jesus Christ, eternal life; God, known in the Faith, possessed in grace, enjoyed in Heaven. Behold the "Peace to men of good will". These are the true goods necessary to all men.

Jesus came upon earth, the Apostle of the Father, for His erring brethren: "Firstborn among many brethren". (Rom. 8: 29.) He came to **enlighten**: "He was the true light that enlightens every man who comes into the world". (John 1: 9.) He was the true light which enlightens every man who is born. He came to enkindle charity: "I have come to cast fire upon the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled?" (Luke 12: 49.) He came to recall the erring: "The Son of Man came to seek and save what was lost". (Luke 19: 10.) Jesus made Himself known as amiable in order to make us know the Father: "Our milk is the humble Christ; our food is the same Christ, equal to the Father; He nourishes you with milk in order to strengthen you with bread". (St. Augustine.)

Here we can know the Apostle Mary: perpetual ciborium who brings Jesus to souls. For all centuries Mary will do what she did as soon as the Son of God was made flesh in her womb.

She immediately went to visit her cousin Elizabeth, and John felt Mary's approach; he was sanctified and rejoiced in his mother's womb.

Mary went with haste; she was quick to accomplish her mission for the first time; an **anxious** conqueror of souls and giver of Jesus and of God.

This is the beginning of her victories over the devil; it is her first great specific apostolate. She frees John from sin; the latter received so much grace that Jesus later testified: "Among those born of woman there has not risen a greater than the Baptist". (Matt. 11: 11.) The chains of Satan were broken; the effusion of the celestial gifts was most copious; through Mary Jesus communicated the merits of the future Passion to little John.

"Elizabeth, his mother, felt, exulted and rejoiced" with her child.

Mary is the **Sent One**, the Messenger, the Apostle of holy joy: "Cause of our joy".

Mary is the Mediatrix of grace and the bearer of Jesus Christ; she is the lily that gives off celestial perfume: she is the branch which yields much fruit. Mary is the communicator of grace, the Mother who dispenses goods to the children; she is the silent distributor of the fruits of the future Passion of her Son. She provides the meeting of the Messiah with the Precursor, of the Master with His Herald.

The Angel had told Mary that Elizabeth, notwithstanding her advanced age, had become a mother; this was a proof of the truth of the Angel's announcement: "nothing shall be impossible with

God". (Luke 1: 36.) Mary ascertains the fact; she sees the prodigy of Elizabeth filled with Holy Spirit; she also witnesses the event of Zachary regaining his speech.

All is through Mary. What gifts are reserved and dispersed by Mary to the souls devoted to her!

Mary is the great lover of mankind, and to all she gives what she has: her Fruit, her Jesus.

Mary is the Apostle. Whatever good one who loves gives, all must end in procuring the True Good, the Supreme Good. All other gifts are a preparation or part of this Gift Who is the sole Gift.

Mary gives the Good: but made man, Messias, Redeemer, Master: Justice, Sanctification, Redemption.

What a visit Mary's was in Zachary's house!

It was not a visit of gossip, of simple courtesy, or of business. It was the charity of Christ that urged her: "The charity of Christ impels us". (2 Cor. 5: 14.) When there is fire in a soul, indolence and coldness are not known. When a soul is under a strong impression, that soul feels the need of communicating it. Thus was Mary's soul after the Son of God was made flesh in her womb.

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Quite frequently, human love is full of egoism. In bestowing material goods to others, man improv-

erishes himself. Instead, in giving away spiritual goods, the giver enriches himself. The welfare of our aided brother redoubles our own: both for the supernatural merit, as well as for the consolation of the heart: "Thou hast won thy brother". (Matt. 18: 15.)

When St. Peter saw the lame man asking alms at the gate of the temple he said to him: "Silver and gold I have none; but what I have, that I give thee". (Acts 3: 6.) He gave him health. Let us give the great treasures which we carry in our heart: faith, charity, hope and the peace of God.

St. Paul's heart is again necessary for the world: "I will most gladly spend and be spent myself for your souls, even though, loving you more, I be loved less". (2 Cor. 12: 15.)

The world has greater need of feeling Jesus' love, His great Heart: "Behold that Heart which so loved men". In fact, the world presents a very moving spectacle: scattered and lost sheep without a shepherd; the starving who are dying of hunger; those who are oppressed by the weight of sin, afflicted by a remorse that tortures. . . . Jesus pronounces over them His "I have compassion on the crowd". (Mark 7: 8.)

A great example is given by generous Priests who have emitted a kind of **vow of service** explicitly or implicitly. They serve souls.

On with the apostolate, therefore. The work of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the Pontifical Association of the Holy Childhood, of the native Clergy . . . their end is truly divine. "Put on therefore, as God's chosen ones . . . a heart of mercy." (Col. 3: 12.) It is a quality of Angels and of Saints to have compassion.

The Son of God became man "to have compassion on the ignorant and erring". (Heb. 5: 2.) Moved to pity for so many erring persons, Jesus called them back to the right way, declaring Himself the **Way**: "I am the Way". He also pointed out the way to Heaven: "Where I go you know, and the way you know." (John 14: 4.)

Let us pray that God infuse in all apostolic souls sentiments of the most lively compassion for the many who walk along the way of evil and of hell.

We Christians must think of our own salvation and of that of our brethren: eternity awaits us.

The second part of the **Our Father** places four petitions on our lips: They express the needs of each one of us and of our neighbor: "Give us this day

our daily bread": which is the bread of truth, the Eucharistic bread of the soul, the material bread for the body. "Forgive us our trespasses." These are the sins, the offences made to God; "as we forgive those who trespass against us". "Lead us not into temptation"; either by not permitting us to be tempted or by not permitting us to fall. "But deliver us from evil" past, present and future. Wherefore, reconciled in Christ with God, we will all be reunited in the paternal home in Heaven.

CHAPTER XVII

FIELD OF APOSTOLATE:

THE FAMILY

The first field of apostolate is the family. God wants it. We are to **sanctify** ourselves in the family and **sanctify** the family.

Behold the Epistle which is read on the Feast of the Holy Family:

“Put on therefore, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, a heart of mercy, kindness, humility, meekness, patience. Bear with one another, if any one has a grievance against any other; even as the Lord has forgiven you, so also do you forgive. But above all these things have charity, which is the bond of perfection. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts; unto that peace, indeed, you were called in one body. Show yourselves thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you abundantly: in all wisdom teach and admonish one another by psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing in your hearts to God by His grace. Whatever you do in word or in work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

"Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is becoming in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter towards them. Children, obey your parents in all things, for that is pleasing in the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, that they may not be discouraged.

"Slaves, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service seeking to please men, but in singleness of heart from fear of the Lord." (Col. 3: 12-22.)

Pope Leo XIII explains: to sanctify ourselves and to sanctify the family. "When the time appointed by His decrees for the fulfillment of the wonderful work of the Redemption of mankind, which had been awaited for centuries, arrived, the God of mercy so disposed the order and economy, that the beginnings of this mission should offer to the world the august spectacle of a family divinely instituted, in which all men would be able to contemplate the most perfect example of domestic society and of every virtue and sanctity. Such, in fact, was the family of Nazareth, in which, before radiating the splendor of its full light, the Son of Justice, that is, Christ God our Savior, upon all nations, He dwelt hidden with the Blessed Virgin, His Mother and St. Joseph, a most holy man who fulfilled the office of father towards Jesus Christ. As for the mutual proofs of love, sanctity of manners,

exercises of piety in the society of the family and in the habitual relations of those who live under the same roof, it is impossible, without a doubt, to celebrate any virtue which did not stand out in the highest degree in this Holy Family, destined to become the model of all the others. And Divine Providence thus established it in His design so full of goodness, so that all Christians, regardless of condition or country, may, if they watch it with attention, easily have the example of every virtue and an invitation to practice it."

The Gospel, in fact, narrates that, "When Herod was dead, behold, an Angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, 'Arise, and take the Child and His Mother, and go into the land of Israel, for those who sought the Child's life are dead'. So he arose and took the Child and His Mother, and went into the land of Israel. But hearing that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there; and being warned in a dream, he withdrew into the region of Galilee. And he went and settled in a town called Nazareth; that there might be fulfilled what was spoken through the prophets, 'He shall be called a Nazarene'." (Matt. 2: 19-23.)

The Holy Family lived there in a loving and operative silence. The only episode related in the Gospel about that time is that of the Holy Family

going to the Temple for the Feast of the Passover, the losing and the finding of Jesus. And this episode is concluded with words that are brief but are worth many books: "And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and grace before God and men." (Luke 2: 51-52.)

Over the thirty years of Jesus' private life, the Gospel almost extends a veil which is only lifted in the episode of Jesus Who, at Jerusalem, gives an unexpected indication and foretelling of His future mission.

It is necessary to almost reconstruct, to guess; following however, indications which are certain.

St. Joseph is the Saint, the Worker, the Foster Father of Jesus Christ, the Spouse of Mary Most Holy, the true Head of the Holy Family. Mary is the true Mother of Jesus Christ, the Most Blessed Virgin, the pure Spouse of St. Joseph, Co-Apostle and Coredemptrix of mankind.

Jesus is the Son of God, Who became true Son of Mary, the Restorer of the work of the Father, Creator and Sanctifier, Who teaches men with the example of a most holy life while awaiting the time to teach them with words and give them back again, by dying, their supernatural life.

Let us contemplate those three most holy persons in that little house that was the most august

sanctuary of mankind, although tiny and poor. How many Angels daily courted their Queen Mary, their God Jesus; and venerated the Saint of silence: Joseph.

The model of children, of youth, was there.

Three lilies were there: Joseph, Mary, and the most scented, Jesus. There, all the individual duties, all the intimate-domestic virtues, all the religious practices and all the social duties were exercised perfectly.

There, everything was simple, but distinguished, for the nobility of feelings that was reflected in everyone's conduct.

There, all conversation was holy; there was the most perfect harmony; there the true ideal was realized: "The celestial became the model of the terrestrial, lived as an image of that one".

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Let us contemplate true laboriousness. St. Joseph was the carpenter of that little town. Hence it was then said of Jesus: "Is not this the carpenter's son?" (Matt. 13: 55.) He worked diligently as the natural and divine law requires; he worked with a supernatural spirit; he did humble work, content with his state in life and with his modest income. In the Holy Family he represented the Celestial Father. God is the most active; in fact, He is a pure

act; St. Joseph imitated Him as well as it is possible for man. His mind was occupied with the things of Heaven; his heart worked, beating always for God.

At first Jesus helped St. Joseph; then He sustained the principal part in the carpenter's workshop; and finally He took all upon Himself, succeeding St. Joseph in the shop: "Is not this the carpenter?" (Mark 6: 2.) "Is He not the carpenter of the town?" the townspeople asked one another when He showed Himself wonder-worker and teacher. "The Father works and I work," said Jesus.

His Soul was supremely active, always contemplating, in vision, the Celestial Father. His Heart continuously beat for God and for mankind.

Mary occupied herself with her household affairs according to the custom of the Hebrew women. Work is the basis of sanctification; the lazy person will never become a saint. We can consider Mary preparing the meals, the clothes; setting the house in order and spinning wool; in her care of Jesus and Joseph and in her moderate relations with her relatives and friends. How elevated were her thoughts! How active was her Heart! Mary kept the words she had heard in the stable and at the Temple after the losing and finding of Jesus, and meditated all in her Heart.

A life of piety. The Gospel tells us that Mary and Joseph "were wont to go every year to Jeru-

salem for the Feast of the Passover. In reality the law only obliged the men (Ex. 23:17); the women submitted to it for piety. Thus a ray of light is cast upon Mary's religious spirit. She did so of her own free will. Mary had the ineffable consolation of seeing "Jesus advance in wisdom and age and grace". (Luke 2: 52.) And she became ever more inflamed with a stronger love toward her God made man, living with her as we always find Jesus-Host in church.

Every day, morning and night, and especially during the appointed hours, according to the Hebrew custom the Holy Family prayed in the house of Nazareth. On the Sabbath they went to the Synagogue together.

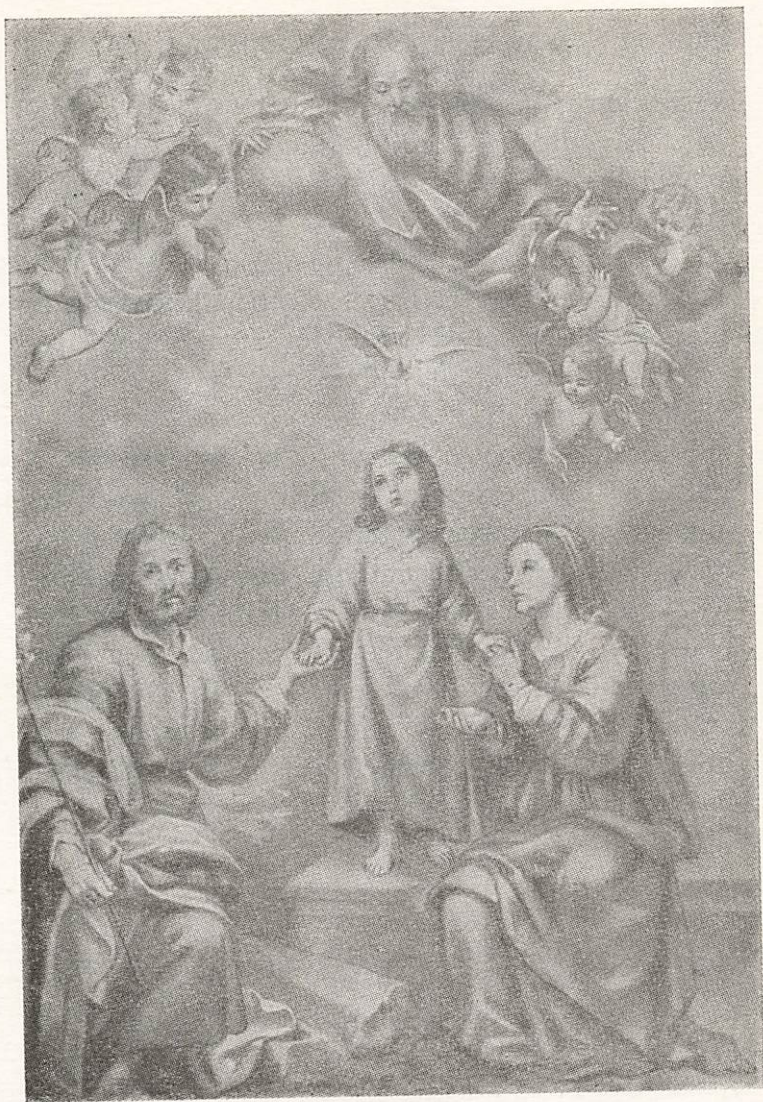
That tiny house was the school of all virtues. Jesus was the most obedient and docile of all children; Mary was the most careful mother; Joseph the best of husbands. He was always attentive to learn the desires of God and always ready to make them known and to execute them. Mary, the submissive spouse, was always attentive to Joseph's needs. Jesus, the foster-Son, obeyed St. Joseph as the true representative of the Celestial Father. Joseph commanded with simplicity and kindness.

Let us establish our families in peace, in Christian spirit and in due order: Husbands and wives who love one another and walk together in fidelity

and respect; parents who understand the treasures which God has entrusted to them in their children, and provide for their spirit, for instructions for soul and body; children who venerate, obey, love and help their parents; homes that are rich with peace, order, honesty, work and piety.

The devotion to the Holy Family should be diffused everywhere. Pope Leo XIII inculcated it.

“For all these motives, rightfully the devotion to the Holy Family, promptly cultivated among the Catholics, grows each day. This is proved by the Christian associations instituted under the name of the Holy Family, as well as by the singular honors that were given it, and above all, by the privileges and spiritual favors granted by Our Predecessors in order to excite the zeal of piety towards it. This devotion, therefore, was given great honor from the XVII century, and, propagated everywhere in Italy, France and Belgium it spread almost throughout Europe. Then, passing across the immensity of the oceans, it spread in Canada and America where it flowered under the happiest auspices. Nothing, in fact, can be found more salutary and more useful for Christian families than the example of the Holy Family, which embraces perfection and with it all the domestic virtues. Implored in the heart of the family, Jesus, Mary and Joseph will come to their aid, and therein will pre-



**“Nothing can be conceived more helpful for
Christian families than the example of the
Holy Family.”**

His Holiness Pope Leo XIII

serve charity, regulate the manners, spur the members to imitate their virtues and will sweeten or render bearable the mortal trials which menace us from every side."

In order to increase devotion to the Holy Family, Pope Leo XIII ordered the Christian families to be consecrated to the Holy Family, and Benedict XV extended the Office and the Mass to the whole Church.

The devotion to Mary in a family exercises a unifying influence and establishes a sweet tie among the members of the house. It drives away many passionate sentiments and harmonizes authority with liberty; it offers a powerful help for the education of the children and teaches them that the parents are the representatives of a superior authority. Authority does not become abuse, but exercise of charity; obedience is not humiliation, but joy and certainty of walking securely.

CHAPTER XVIII

MARY AND THE CHURCH

The Church is the continuation of the Incarnation in the centuries and in the extension of time. She is the Mystical Body of Christ. Jesus Christ Himself is the Head: "Behold, I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world." And in the Church He preaches, governs, sanctifies: He does everything for her, with her, in her.

Mary is the life of the Church: with Jesus Christ, for Jesus Christ, in Jesus Christ.

The good, the supernatural life, the salvation of the world are brought by the Church. But everything passed and passes through Mary. Mary's apostolate, therefore, is as vast as the Church. Nor is her apostolate only for those who are already children and members of the Church, but also, in a certain way, all those whom the Church or Jesus Christ—it is one and the same—calls: "Come to Me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11: 28); all you who err, suffer, and groan under the consequences of sin (yours and Adam's), and I will comfort you.

Why is Mary the life of the Church? Because she is the life of Christ; consequently: of each of His members: Hail, Holy Queen . . . our life. . . . She is the life of all the members united to the Head; of all the branches united to the vine.

Jesus is the Institutor of the Church, the first Prince, the Head of the Mystical but real Body, which is the Church. He Himself said: "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life". (John 14: 6.) Mary is the life for Christ and with Christ: "Our life, our sweetness and our hope". With reason, the Founder of the Church was born of her, from Him are life and salvation.

On Calvary Jesus Christ proclaimed Mary our Mother; and it is precisely the Mother who transmits life to the children. St. Augustine teaches that Mary cooperates in her charity, so that there may be generated and born in the Church the faithful, who are members of the Head, Christ, born in His time, of Mary.

Henry Rolland, in a book "The Glorious Soul of Mary" explains the most beautiful and profound reason for which Mary may be said to be the Life of the Church. According to what Abbot Rolland writes, the Church is the new incarnation of Jesus Christ, mystical, but true and real.

Now, the mysteries of the Incarnate Word are in a sense reproduced in the Church with the inter-

vention and the active cooperation of Mary. The Church, like Jesus Christ, has its conception, nativity, infancy, adolescence and virility.

In all these phases can be repeated: "And Mary, the Mother of Jesus, was there".

The Church was born in the Cenacle on Pentecost. The Cenacle is the Bethlehem of the Church. There the shepherds of the New Testament were present. And Mary was there.

The Church had her infancy among the Jewish and pagan people, was sought to death by the powerful and the persecutors; struggled with human weakness and the power of the demons. It was necessary to have someone who would pray, encourage, illuminate with word and example. It was the question of the first steps of this society which was beginning its march across the centuries and the nations. And Mary was there.

The Church had her adolescence: exterior struggles and interior heresies. Her enemies and unworthy children would have suffocated her, removing the crown of glory of divinity from the Founder Jesus Christ. In order to defend herself, witness her gathered in the Council of Ephesus. And Mary was there.

Cornelius A. Lapide exclaims: "O immense goodness of Jesus. He willed that His Mother out-

live Him on this earth, to succor the Church: that in His place she should be a firm Column, Doctor of the Apostles, Consolation of the faithful”.

Then follows a series of centuries for the Church. In every page of her history, every persecution, in every heresy, tempest, assault, whether external or internal, the Church won. The devil's head was crushed: “And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16: 18); because Mary was there.

The Church had a wonderful and continuous expansion; admirable and peaceful conquests; admirable fruits of sanctity; admirable, perpetual and always renewed youth. . . . And Mary was there.

From Heaven Mary assists, enlightens, defends, sustains, vivifies: she is the life, which never separates itself from the body: And Mary was there.



St. John Damascene's words, full of admiration for Mary who animates and actuates the Church, are opportune.

He praises Mary who, as the sun, does not cease to shed her light and heat on the earth. The sun is like the soul of nature, insofar as its continuous irradiation, brings fertility, life, flowers, movement, light, fruit. Elsewhere he bursts into a sacred lyric of praise: “O Mary, you are a continuous ray

of light, the gracious treasure of life, the overflowing stream of blessings, the mediatrix of all graces. Although you were assumed into Heaven, you continue to expand your light, joy, life in the souls, torrents of love and perennial blessings."



If we desire to have an explanation of the inexhaustible fecundity of Mary's apostolate, we must seek it: a) in her interior life on earth; b) in her immense glory in Heaven.

Mary was a profoundly interior, spiritual and contemplative soul. The Evangelist St. Luke twice tells us that Mary "kept in mind all these things, pondering them in her Heart". (Luke 2: 19-51.)

We call her Queen of Patriarchs because she surpassed them all in her desire for the Messias; Queen of Prophets because she knew the secret things of God better than all of them; Queen of Apostles because she revealed to them many facts and words known only to her.

A pious Marian writer affirms: "Although the Apostles were illuminated on all the truths through the descent of the Holy Spirit, nevertheless the Most Blessed Virgin understood them more profoundly. She was full of the divine truths, as of divine grace and of divine virtue."

The Angel greeted her "full of grace", he rejoiced with her because God was with her, that is, Mary was united to Him through charity. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ taught more to Mary than to the Apostles, yet He had said to them: "He (the Holy Spirit) will teach you all the truth". (John 16: 13.)

It is helpful to remember a teaching of St. Thomas, called the Angelic Doctor. Commenting on the episode of the Marriage Feast at Cana and of Jesus' and Mary's presence, one sees a figure of the mystical wedding between Jesus and the Church. And, as at that wedding Mary intervened, so at all weddings between Jesus and the soul, this Mother intervenes and obtains grace with her prayers; and the union between Christ and the soul is realized.

In the Church Mary is the "Seat of Divine Wisdom", which she communicates to Pontiffs, Doctors, Writers, Preachers; because she is the "Mother of Divine Grace" through whom souls are generated to Christ.

Truth and grace were in Christ: "Full of grace and of truth"; truth and grace are still the life of the Church; through them we walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ.



Love the Church. Jesus Christ "gave His blood and His life that He might sanctify her, cleansing her in the bath of water by means of the word; in order that He might present to Himself the Church in all her glory, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she might be holy and without blemish." (Eph. 5: 26-27.) Hence we must think as the Church, pray with the Church, defend the Church, extend the Church. . . . We must love the Pope, the Pastor, the Ministers of the Church. All this renders us children of God, imitators of Jesus Christ, living members of His Mystical Body and heirs of Heaven. This was a general view.

Coming to the concrete, however, each one must love his Diocese, his Parish, his Priests. There is an intense movement made of affectionate interest in behalf of the Parish, the Diocese, one's own Priests: "The Priest represents the person of the Church, repeats her words, assumes her voice".

A good widow had given a Christian education to her children who now were settled very comfortably. She had also assisted and served her sick husband with piety and sacrifice for a long time. Finally, at the age of sixty, she dedicated all her energies to the Parish. She looked for the grounds on which to build the Parish church; then, day after day, she went out from house to house

seeking offerings, organizing charity drives, teaching Catechism, sacred hymns, prayers. . . . The Church was built, the Catholic organizations flourished, the parochial life and the moral transformation of all the Parish, including the men, was so evident to all, that the people gave a strange, but significant name to that widow: "The Mother of the Parish".

Let us be good parishioners and live with the Parish. Be a good member of the Diocese; live with the Diocese; in order to be a faithful child of the Church and live the life of the Church. Behold how one belongs to Christ in time and in eternity.

In the Parish there are the sacred functions, the administration of the Sacraments, the preaching of the divine Word. Be diligent, give good example, support your Pastor's plans and initiatives.

To the men and boys awaits the first place around the pulpit, the altar rail, the choir. It is an honor and a great thing to serve God: worthy of men first of all. In the Parish there are works of charity, Catholic Associations, confraternities: the good parishioner takes part in these according to his state in life; he speaks well of them and furthers them.

In the Parish there are Catechism classes, perhaps there are some social and political Christian initiatives; schools, motion pictures and charitable

works. The good parishioner will contribute toward them and take part in them: with offerings, works and prayers.

In every Parish one may live as a good Christian or not, save himself or be damned. Weeds always grow among the grain: be the elect grain for the great day in which it will be gathered into the eternal granary, while the weeds will be burned.

Be a true apostle in your Parish: humble, pious, persevering.

Do not say: "I am a Catholic, but not clerical".

Do not say: "I am religious, but do not practice religion": there is only one road.

Do not say: "I am a gentleman, even though I don't pray or go to confession"; our first duties regard God.

Do not say: "Priests, yes, but my Priest, no".

Live as one with your Priest, with your Parish, with your Diocese, with the Pope who today governs the Church.

For one who has good will, everything cooperates for the good; for one who does not have good will, light becomes darkness, the cross foolishness, the Sacraments something insipid. But one who seeks God with an upright heart, with sincere faith and a pure conscience finds great peace.

CHAPTER XIX

MARY THE APOSTLE: TEACHING

Mary is the Mother who rears her children in the spiritual life and leads them to God. St. Grignon de Montfort said: "With Mary one makes more progress in the love of God in a month than one can make in many years, by living little united to this good Mother".

St. Paul writes to the Ephesians: "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, exhort you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all humility and meekness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, careful to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: one body and one Spirit, even as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one Baptism; one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and throughout all, and in us all. . . . And He Himself gave some men as apostles, and some as prophets, others again as evangelists, and others as pastors and teachers, in order to perfect the saints for a work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the deep knowledge of the Son of God, to perfect manhood, to the ma-

ture measure of the fullness of Christ. . . ." (Eph. 4: 1-14.) All whom God called, those who as Apostles, preached, or as Evangelists helped them; or as Pastors governed the Christian people or as Doctors instructed the faithful: all are willed by Christ for the perfection of His Mystical Body, the Church. Christians must tend toward perfection, until they reach the virility of Christ. Jesus forms Himself in us gradually, from child to perfect manhood, according to our progress in perfection. Mary had a most noble part: she did not preach, but was in everyone's mouth; she taught everyone and made known the fundamental mysteries.

Mary's presence during the first moments of the Church was of great comfort for the Apostles and for the faithful. She did not have powers of jurisdiction, but she enjoyed a very high prestige for her dignity of Mother of God, for her sanctity and for her holy words.

Some time after the Descent of the Holy Spirit the Apostles divided the world among themselves for the purpose of going there to preach: Mary followed St. John the Evangelist to Ephesus, according to Tradition. There, through the Apostle's preaching and the Most Holy Virgin's example, a flourishing Christian community was formed.

Many converts went to Ephesus to become acquainted with and to pay their homage to the Mother of God. She had a word of comfort for everyone.

St. Ignatius, Martyr, wrote: "I, as well as many of the faithful of Antioch, have an ardent desire to see the Mother of Jesus, since many told me that she possesses a great abundance of every grace and has great treasures of virtue in her Heart".

The same Saint supplicates the Blessed Virgin thus: "I have already prayed you many times and I again beg you to deign to fortify, in you and through you, the Christians recently converted to the faith they have embraced".

From Greece, St. Dionysius Areopagite, a disciple of St. Paul, went to Ephesus to see the Blessed Mother. He then wrote that, after seeing the Blessed Virgin's simplicity and dignity he was so full of admiration that, had he not believed in the One God he would have prostrated himself at her feet.

Undoubtedly Mary told St. Luke about the facts concerning the Infancy of Jesus: the Incarnation, Birth, flight into Egypt. No one knew them as Mary did.

That which St. Ildephonsus, Bishop, wrote regarding Mary's apostolate of word and of teaching is worth considering; also that of her divine science and of the influence she exerted on the Evangelists and in the apostolate which today is called of the good press: "Since Mary took part and was a direct witness of many events in the life of Jesus Christ, she was able to relate them with certainty and pre-

cision to the Apostles, who, instructed by her, since they had not been present, were able to repeat them more minutely to the people and, at the right moment, were able, in a clear and permanent manner, to expose them to all mankind in **writing**. (5 Sermon on the Assumption.)

The Venerable St. Bede expresses himself in a similar manner: Commenting St. Luke's text (2: 19, 51): "Mary kept in mind all these things, pondering them in her Heart", he says: "The Blessed Virgin knew well all that the Savior said and did; she remembered and meditated all in her Heart with the aim of being able to relate everything to the Apostles and the faithful when she would be questioned so that everything would be preached and written for the whole world." (Homily 1st Sunday after Epiphany.)

St. Thomas Aquinas wrote with theological precision: "By means of **her teaching**, Mary acquired the merits of the Apostles and of the Evangelists"; because they would not have been able to **preach nor write** many things without special revelation, as, for example: The Annunciation, the Incarnation, the Visit to St. Elizabeth." (Sermon on the Epistle of the Assumption.)

Among the writings of St. Ambrose we find this precious sentence: "I am not surprised that St. John, more than the other Apostles, has revealed

to us the divine mysteries, because he lived with Mary, who knew better the designs of God”.

The Abbot Rupert de Deutz calls the Mother of God “Teacher of Teachers”; and adds with subtlety: “Although the Apostles had received the Holy Spirit, Mary’s teaching was still necessary, as a clarification and expression of the Holy Spirit in order to understand better and to add what was missing”.

The observations which St. Thomas, Bishop, makes in reference to the office Mary fulfilled, after the Ascension of Jesus Christ into Heaven, in the Church are very beautiful and instructive: “It is not difficult to imagine how much Mary did after Jesus’ Ascension. Her mortal life must have seemed long and arduous; with sighs and tears she must have hastened the moment of reuniting herself to her Jesus. But, at the same time, she was comforted by the thought that such was the will of God; also, by the persuasion that the growing Church needed the instruction and the comfort that she gave the faithful, to enlighten and fortify them. Moreover, from all parts the Christians came in great numbers in order to see the greatest of all creatures, by means of whom the Son of God had deigned to become Incarnate. And the reality was greater than the fame; to see her surpassed all anticipation.”

Hence Mary's stay here on this earth, not of a few days, but of a number of years, was the will of Jesus, so that the Church could be better established through her teachings and her virtues. (Office of the Queen of the Apostles.)

"Go . . . teach ye all nations. . . ." (Matt. 28: 18-20.) This is Jesus Christ's command. It is our duty to fulfill it as completely as possible. Hence: if the printed word multiplies the Word of God; if the screen speaks so efficaciously and widely; if the radio makes the word arrive to the families and to individuals in vast zones, what will the practical consequences be? The Pontiffs Pius XI and Pius XII have already spoken. Facts, counsels and appeals tell both the Catholics and the Priest: Use the most modern and fruitful means. . . . The Apostles divided the world among themselves in order to fulfill completely the divine order; ours is the duty to reach everyone with the means which science places at the service of the Gospel to correspond to the graces which today are given us to completely fulfill the: "Preach the Gospel to every creature".

The Press:

Napoleon called it a great power; Pierre l'Eremitte, the terrestrial omnipotence; Stalz, the field

upon which the lots are decided between Heaven and Hell.

Combes says that France was torn away from the Catholic Church by the anticlerical press; an atheistic paper affirms that the press for children would have liberated their brains from faith in God; Leo XIII, stated that the evil press does an immense harm; St. Pius X said that it is useless to build churches if along with these there is not also created a defense, the Catholic press.

Pope Pius XI said to the Bishop of Rieti: "The apostolate of the press is the most apostolic work that can be accomplished".

In his discourse on St. Anthony Claret the same Pontiff added: "The press, the book adopts means and methods which antiquity neither knew nor had; whereas today they represent such an important and active part in our life". The reason is this: this apostolate is the same thing as preaching; it is the word of God for the salvation of souls. The methods are different: one uses the press, the other the word of mouth.

Of St. Claret Pope Pius XI said also, exalting him as the apostle of the press: "This is one of his titles, a glory, a characteristic merit: to have coupled the pastoral ministry with the largest, most modern,

most provident, most lively, most industrious, most popularly genial task of the book, of the little book, of the leaflet, devourer of space".

It is the same as was written and said of St. Paul.

While still a Cardinal, Pope Pius XII wrote: "It would be inconceivable that those who consecrate their energies to the apostolate should not place the Catholic paper in the first place: because it enlightens, removes prejudices, directs public opinions towards Christian civilization".

The Screen:

Pope Pius XII said: "At times we wonder whether the directors of the motion picture industry fully realize the value of the vast power that they have of influencing the social life in the family or in the most widespread communities. The eyes and ears are as spacious avenues which lead directly to the soul of man, and these are opened wide without being invited by the same spectators of your films.

"What is it that enters from the screen into the intimate recesses of the mind, where youth's store of knowledge increases, and the norms and motives of action which will mould the definite character are formed and stimulated? Is it something that will contribute to making them better,

industrious citizens, lovers of the law, God-fearing, who find their joy and recreation in healthy pleasures and comfort? St. Paul appreciated Menander, the ancient Greek poet, when he wrote to the faithful of his church in Corinth that "evil discourses corrupt good morals". (1 Cor. 15: 33.) That which was true then is none the less true today, because human nature does not change substantially with the centuries. And if it is true, as it certainly is, that evil discourses corrupt good morals, how much more efficaciously are morals not corrupted by evil discourses when these are accompanied by the vivid portrayal of behavior which mocks the law of God and of decency? O, the immense store of good that can be produced by the motion picture industry! This is the reason why the spirit of evil, always so active in the world, wants to pervert this instrument for its own impious ends."

The Radio:

"More than fourteen years have passed since Our Predecessor of saintly memory personally inaugurated the Vatican Radio Station. In doing this He was accompanied by Mr. Marconi, who had designed and supervised its construction, and the two first words were of thanksgiving to God Who had given man the power of discovering and perfecting the mechanism through which the human

voice is carried to the furthest ends of the earth and is heard by men of every nation, people and tribe under the sun.

“Like all human inventions, it may be used as an instrument of good or of evil. It has been used and is used to disseminate calumnies, to mislead the simple and non-informed, to disturb the peace in nations and among peoples.

“This is to abuse the gift of God; and it is the duty of the directors responsible, as far as possible, to prevent and eliminate this. May the good done by the radio always surpass the evil, until the latter may become annoying and fall by itself. Is this hoping too much? Certainly it is a noble end worthy of the best endeavors of man, and this is Our fervent prayer while We ask God to bless you and your dear ones at home.”

We conclude with the words of Pope Pius XI in the Encyclical “Christian Education of Youth”:

“More than ever nowadays an extended and careful vigilance is necessary, inasmuch as the dangers of moral and religious shipwreck are greater for inexperienced youth. Especially is this true of impious and immoral books, often diabolically circulated at low prices; of the cinema, which multiplies every kind of exhibition; and now also of radio, which facilitates every kind of communication.

"The problem of the necessity of these new and urgent apostolates has already given rise among Catholics from all parts, to a praiseworthy ferment of thoughts and actions. The results are already consoling, and much is still to be expected. The voice of the Church, which is Teacher and Model of every apostolate, and of the various needs of society, will indicate the suitable means and the convenient forms so that the Word of God may be propagated and glorified."

Prayer

For Those Who Thirst for Souls As Jesus Does

Lord, in union with all the Priests who today offer Holy Mass, I offer Thee Jesus-Host and myself a petty sacrifice:

1. In reparation for the innumerable blasphemies, errors and impurities which are spread throughout the world by the radio, the movies and the press.

2. To implore Thy mercy for the innumerable perverse or innocent persons who are snatched away from Thy fatherly Heart by these modern means of evil.

3. For the conversion of many ministers of Satan, who, through the radio, the movies and the press, have raised pulpits against the Divine Master, corrupting the mind, heart and activity of men.

4. To follow only Him, Whom Thou, O Heavenly Father, in the excess of Thy love, hast given to the world proclaiming: "This is My beloved Son, hear Him".

5. To know that only Jesus is the perfect Master, that is, Truth that enlightens, the Way or model of sanctity, the true Life of the soul, that is, sanctifying grace.

6. To obtain that Priests and Religious, consecrated to the spreading of doctrine and Christian morality throughout the world by prayer and the more expeditious and efficacious modern means of good, be multiplied.

7. That the writers, technicians and propagandists be holy, full of wisdom and zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

8. To ask of Thee that Catholic publications may prosper, grow and drown out the voice of error and of evil.

9. That we may recognize our ignorance and misery and the need to humbly kneel before Thy holy Tabernacle, O Lord, imploring light, compassion and mercy.

CHAPTER XX

CELESTIAL APOSTOLATE:

DEFENSE OF THE CHURCH

Mary is the defense of the Church. "Tower of David, Tower of ivory" she is called in the litany. Many times she saved the ensnared life of the Mystical Christ, the Church; as, together with Joseph, she saved the life of the Infant from the wicked Herod. Jesus was a sign of contradiction in life; greatly loved and greatly hated; until He was crucified. The same thing happens to the Church. From century to century, new Herods and new Pilates have laid snares or have continually attacked her. The Blessed Mother has always rendered the Church victorious. In fact, Jesus did not promise the Church perpetual peace, but perpetual victory. Mary always crushes the head of the enemy: "The gates of Hell shall not prevail against it". (Matt. 16:18.)

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St. Matthew narrates that after the Magi had adored Jesus and then returned to their country, Herod, very jealous, greatly suspected that he had

been tricked. He had hoped that the Magi would have returned to tell him whether they had found the King of the Jews and where He was. But the Magi, having been warned in a dream, returned to their country by another road. Then Herod commanded the massacre of all the boys in Bethlehem and all its vicinity who were two years old or under. But the "Angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph, saying, 'Arise, and take the Child and His Mother, and flee into Egypt, and remain there until I tell thee. For Herod seeks the Child to destroy Him'". (Matt. 2: 13.)

Joseph, with Mary and Jesus, left immediately. Tradition and Art love to portray Joseph leading a donkey on whose back Mary is seated holding the Babe in her arms, on her way to exile in Egypt. They were leaving their native country with all the comforts it could offer them. They were going to a country traditionally hostile to the Hebrews; there they were to remain for an indefinite period of time, without being able to foresee how they would live. But Jesus' life was at stake; they could not hesitate. The persecution was unjust. God did not lack the means to thwart the wicked plans of Herod. Why did God run away from this man? These reasonings are human: "God's thoughts are not our thoughts; God's ways are not the ways of man". (Isa. 55: 8.)

The Blessed Virgin did not waste time in human considerations; she knew her mission: to give, prepare and preserve the Child, the Host for the Sacrifice. And she was to do this according to the ways marked by Divine Providence.

St. John Chrysostom writes: "That Jesus Christ should flee was not fear, but mystery; it was free disposition, not danger for the Creator; it was divine virtue, not human weakness. Being the Author of life, He did not flee for fear of death, but to give life to the world. But, having been born to die, why did He flee death? Had He died in infancy, Jesus would have deprived us of His ministry of salvation. In fact, He came to edify us with His example, to give us His precepts, to preach His Gospel of salvation."

This would not have taken place if Baby Jesus had been Herod's victim.

Mary is the Missionary.

St. Thomas asks: "Why did God select Egypt in preference to other regions?" And he answers: "Because it is God's unique characteristic to be merciful in His anger. God was indignant against Egypt because the Egyptians had persecuted the chosen people: so He took revenge in a divine way. He did so by going to visit, among the first, the Egyptians in order to illuminate them, to give them His spiritual treasures."

In fact, the presence of the Holy Family brought many blessings to that region. St. John Chrysostom wrote: "Just as Mary's visit to St. Elizabeth sanctified all that family, so the Holy Family's visit to Egypt sanctified all that region." After the descent of the Holy Spirit, Egypt was evangelized by St. Mark and became the land of Saints: St. Athanasius, St. Cyril, St. Catherine, St. Apollonia. Egypt's deserts were populated by thousands of hermits, among whom were St. Paul and St. Anthony.

Mary brings Jesus. After every future persecution it will be seen how God will derive good from evil: through Mary and with Mary. Mary brought her Jesus to the Gentiles; she was the first missionary, in fact, she was the Missionary of the infidels.

Two hundred years later the Mystical Jesus Christ took refuge in Egypt. The Christians were persecuted by new Herods—the Roman Emperors. Thousands of them took refuge in Egypt and this land became the center of life and of Christian perfection, from whence the splendors of doctrine, of virtue and of Christian piety were diffused. Religious life had Egypt as its cradle and its first concrete form. Let us adore God's inscrutable designs: "Man proposes, but God disposes". Herod persecutes, and God develops His plans. Herod kills, God

saves souls. "The enemies of God gathered against the Lord and His Christ; God laughs at them." "Christ wins, Christ reigns, Christ rules."

Mary prepares the triumphs. In the prayer of the Mass of the Flight into Egypt, celebrated on February 17, we say: "O God, protector of those who hope in Thee, Who hast saved from the hands of Herod Thine Only-Begotten Son by His flight into Egypt, grant, we beseech Thee, through the intercession of the Most Blessed and ever Virgin Mary, that, freed from all dangers of mind and of body, we may merit to reach our heavenly home."

Wherever one goes, carrying Jesus in his heart, he always communicates graces and blessings: especially after Mass, Holy Communion, the visit to the Blessed Sacrament and the reading of the Holy Gospel.

The following fact is repeated every century. The Albigensians, a revolutionary and sacrilegious group, were denying many truths of the Faith and devastating beautiful regions of France, Spain and Italy. At first St. Dominic tried to oppose them with his apostolic words, but to no avail. He then had recourse to Mary; he recited the Most Holy Rosary and had all the people recite it too, while meditating on the mysteries. Mary won and peace returned.

The Turks were terrible enemies of the Church during various centuries. Innumerable Christians of Spain, Africa and other countries on the Mediterranean coast were taken by the Turks and sold as slaves. The Blessed Virgin intervened. She appeared to St. Peter Nolasco, St. Raymond of Penafort and to James I, King of Aragon. To these three holy men she manifested her desire that they institute an Order for the redemption of slaves. Thus the Order of the **Mercedarians**, whose end was to ransom and free Christian slaves, was instituted.

On October 7, 1571, the Christian fleet, under the command of John of Austria, won a glorious victory over the Turks at Lepanto. St. Pius V and all the Christians had prayed fervently to the Queen of Heaven. Two hundred ships were sunk; ninety were set on fire; thirty-thousand Turks were killed; twenty-five thousand Christians were freed. The power of the Turks on the seas was broken. In memory of this fact St. Pius V added the title "Help of Christians" to the Litany and called Mary **Our Lady of Victory**. Two years later Pope Gregory XIII established October 7, as the feast of the Most Holy Rosary.

In 1863, the Turks attempted to attack Catholicism by land. They wanted to invade Europe, especially Italy and their formidable army was al-

ready attacking Vienna. Pope Innocent XI asked John Sobieski, King of Poland, to go to Vienna's aid. The Polish army was small, but the King led his army in the name of Mary and attacked the powerful enemy. The latter was completely routed and the Holy Father established the feast of the Holy Name of Mary.

A similar victory was obtained over the Turks in 1716 by Prince Eugene of Savoy, a most devoted son of Mary. He never started an attack without having first recited the Rosary. Pope Clement XI then extended the feast of the Most Holy Rosary to the entire Church.

In the sixteenth century Protestantism assailed the Catholic Church. But the Marian Congregations, especially through the work of the Jesuits, encouraged the faithful to hope in the Blessed Mother.

Campana writes: "When the Protestant Reformation, as an erupting volcano, poured out over Europe its destructive lava which destroyed devotion to the Blessed Mother and the ancient Catholic institutions, Mary's frequent apparitions on the confines of Italy saved the center of Catholicism: Italy and Rome from that furious devastation."

When Napoleon Bonaparte, proud of his triumphs, persecuted the Church and imprisoned Pope Pius VI at Savona, the Blessed Virgin went to the aid of Jesus Christ's Vicar, who had invoked

her help. Pope Pius VI had also made a vow to crown the Virgin of Mercy at Savona if she would obtain his freedom. Napoleon was defeated and was forced to abdicate on April 11, 1814; while Pope Pius VI, upon being freed, fulfilled his vow; he instituted the feast of Our Lady Help of Christians and re-entered Rome amidst the joyful applause of his children.

During the past century, liberalism and rationalism arose against the Faith, deifying reason. The Immaculate Virgin intervened and, through her apparitions at Lourdes and her working of many miracles, she re-awakened faith in the supernatural.

Sensualism and materialism came next. Pope Leo XIII re-awakened the devotion to the Most Holy Rosary. As a result there was a strong reaction on the part of Catholics; esteem for the Holy See increased immensely; it spread over the whole world. The cause of the Church is the cause of Jesus Christ and of Mary.

Now the struggle is between Catholicism and atheistic communism which, from Russia, attempts to invade the entire world. But the Blessed Virgin has already intervened in the struggle. She appeared at Fatima, invited men to confide in her Heart; asked that penance be made and predicted that Russia will be converted. Mary will win in her maternal way: by saving.

"Praise ye the Lord our God, Who hath not forsaken them that hope in Him, and by me His handmaid He hath fulfilled His mercy which He promised to the house of Israel, and He hath killed the enemy of His people by my hand. The rod of Jesse hath blossomed: the Virgin hath begotten God and man: God hath re-established peace, reconciling in Himself the lowest with the highest." (Mass of the Queen of Apostles.)

We fly to thy patronage, O holy Mother of God, despise not thou our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from all dangers, O glorious and Blessed Virgin. (Liturgy.) Defend us, O Lord, from all dangers of soul and of body; and through the intercession of the blessed and glorious ever Virgin Mary, Mother of God, together with that of all the Saints, grant us, we beseech Thee, health and peace, that all adversities and errors being overcome, Thy Church may serve Thee with tranquil liberty. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen. (Liturgy.)

CHAPTER XXI

CELESTIAL APOSTOLATE:

REFUGE OF SINNERS

The end of the Incarnation was to reconcile man with God. And with this mission God associated Mary.

The holy King David says that God did not will to manifest any other attribute as much as He did His mercy. It is also the attribute which most consoles mankind, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Furthermore, this is also Mary's attribute, mission and principal office. All the other virtues and gifts lead us to admiration; this one, instead, leads to confidence. St. Bernard says: "We praise her virginity, announce her humility, but her mercy to the unhappy is the dearest; we embrace it more affectionately; remember it more often and have recourse to it more frequently."

Mary is called **Refuge of sinners**. A great apostolate: "Words of truth: the Son of God came to save sinners".

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In St. Luke's Gospel we read that the Pharisees and the Scribes murmured against Christ say-

ing: "This Man welcomes sinners and eats with them". In answer, Jesus narrated the following parables:

"What man of you having a hundred sheep, and losing one of them; does not leave the ninety-nine in the desert, and go after that which is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it upon his shoulders rejoicing. And on coming home he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost'. I say to you that, even so, there will be joy in Heaven over one sinner who repents, more than over ninety-nine just who have no need of repentance.

"Or what woman, having ten drachmas, if she loses one drachma, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying; 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the drachma that I had lost.' Even so, I say to you, there will be joy among the Angels of God over one sinner who repents." (Luke 15: 1-10.)

Behold how Jesus loves us. He declared it with these words: "I am the good Shepherd, and I know Mine and Mine know Me, and I lay down My life for My sheep. (John 10: 14-16.) In fact, He died on the cross for us. Mary's love is modelled

on that of Jesus Christ. For this reason on Calvary Mary united her sufferings to those of Jesus for the salvation of sinners. If Jesus is the good Shepherd, Mary is the Mother of the Good Shepherd. She has the same tender care: to seek the lost sheep, the lost drachma; to rejoice for the sinner who returns to the arms of God. She moves all Heaven to recover a soul, which is much more important than a lost drachma.

“Who can measure the length, the width, the height, the depth of Mary’s mercy?” asks St. Bernard. Mary is also our Mother; therefore the words of Isaias suffice: “Can a woman forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? And if she should forget, yet will I not forget thee”, says the Lord. (Isaias 49: 15.) This is also true of Mary. She is the best and most perfect of mothers. In fact she is the **Mother of Mercy**. The more miserable the state of the sinner is, the more tender she becomes in her care, and the closer she draws him to the Tribunal of God.

St. Francis de Sales’ reasoning is tender and gracious: “If Mary’s divine Son had been born, lived and died only for the just, then I, knowing myself so unworthy would not dare ask for mercy, and if I did dare, she could answer me: ‘Wretch, I feel sorry for you, but I cannot do anything for you’. But no. She knows that more than for the just,

her Son came to call sinners (Matt. 9: 13).” The motive and the end of the Incarnation was to save sinners. (1 Tim. 1: 13.) The Church says: “For our salvation”, He came down from Heaven. Mary knows that the dying Jesus constituted her the Mother of everyone. She knows that mothers love with a special love those children who are weaker, more infirm and in more need of care than the others. She knows that it was precisely for these children that she received the power that the Most Holy Trinity gave her.

Mary knows the kinds and the number of sicknesses to which our heart is subjected. St. Ambrose writes: “Our fever is avarice, our fever is concupiscence, our fever is lust, our fever is pride, our fever is ambition, our fever is anger.” Yet, even if feverish or dead, we must not lose hope. We find health and resurrection in Mary’s mercy.

Because we are sinners Mary does not cease to be our Mother. With the Church let us say to her: “Pray for us sinners”. Mary’s thoughts are not vindictive, but peaceful and solicitous: hence let us invoke her; she will grant our requests. Jesus on the cross prayed for sinners instead of invoking vengeance; in Heaven, Mary always does this also: “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do”. The Church places in Mary’s mouth the fol-

lowing words: "He that shall find me, shall find life, and shall have salvation from the Lord". (Prov. 8: 35.)

In the first place Mary recalls the erring. The best conversions are not those which take place on the death bed, but those followed by a truly Christian life—a life of reparation; or, better still, by a life of apostolate, as that of St. Matthew, St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Augustine, St. Margaret of Cortona. Very often I have seen young women change their evil ways and become good mothers, men with bad habits become exemplary fathers; boys who had fallen into sin become fervent Priests and religious; souls who, after having dedicated their lives to God and then deviated from the path, change their ways and become zealous religious. I have also seen persecutors, as St. Paul, become apostles: writers, painters, artists—even the wicked—become the voice of God and of the Church. I have seen persons who were wasting their life in fickleness and debauchery, as St. Francis of Assisi, repair with an edifying life; dishonest men become exemplary, miserly men become beneficent, ambitious men become humble followers of the Cross. In all these cases I have seen Mary's hand, just as when we see a child we know that he is in the world because there was a woman who became his mother. St. Mary of Egypt abandoned a life of

sin and became a great saint through the intercession of the Most Holy Virgin. While in Jerusalem during the Feast of the Holy Cross, Mary of Egypt, out of curiosity, followed a group of pilgrims. When she reached the door of the church, she tried to enter, but felt an unseen hand thrust her back. She tried several times, but in vain. Enlightened by the grace of God, she examined her conscience and was humiliated. Lifting her eyes heavenwards to invoke God's mercy, she saw a beautiful image of Mary whose compassionate eyes seemed to invite her. She prayed to the Blessed Virgin and asked to be permitted to enter the Temple in order to go to confession. She did so; then she retired in the desert where she prepared herself for Heaven with seventeen years of penance and meditation. After his conversion, St. Ignatius of Loyola became the Founder of the admirable Society of Jesus, which does such immense good all over the world. It would prove very helpful to read the recent books about "Mary and great converts".

Moreover, Mary reconciles the dying sinners with her Son.

On Calvary, two malefactors were crucified, one on either side of the Divine Savior. There Jesus and Mary worked their first conquest, snatching a soul from the devil at the last moment: one of the two thieves repented, prayed to Jesus and was

assured of Paradise. Mary was praying and offering her sorrows and those of her Son; Jesus welcomed and forgave the dying man. This was the beginning of that which now is repeated very often every day. Mary has very tender care for the dying children who run the risk of becoming the devil's prey forever.

Among the external causes for the conversion of the good thief, two are piously held by some authors:

1) Jesus' shadow fell on the good thief.

2) Mary's presence between the cross of her Son and that of the thief who was converted.

A. Salmeron reminds us of them (Comm. in Evang. historium t. 9, tract. 40), and they are embraced by A. Spinello (*De Virginis Beatissimae Deiparae laudibus praeclarissimis*), who says: "We may fully contemplate that through Jesus Christ's shadow cast on His right side, the celebrated and holy conversion of the thief took place; if, in fact, the shadow of St. Peter, the Prince of the Church, restored the health of the sick, how much more efficacious must we esteem the shadow of Our Lord Jesus Christ in restoring health to the soul of the thief and in liberating him from horrible sins, especially since the Most Holy Mother of God stood as Mediatrix between the cross of her Son and that of the thief; therefore it is not surprising that

the thief should have received help from the prayers of so great a Mediatrix and hence was perfectly converted to Christ”.

How often a rosary, a medal of the Blessed Mother, pious novenas, penances for the salvation of obstinate sinners who are ill, have obtained real miracles from this Mother! “Pray for us now and at the hour of our death.”

St. Bernard says: “In Heaven we have a Queen who is also our Mother; an Intercessor to whom the Redeemer can deny nothing: she is the Refuge of sinners; she inspires the greatest confidence; she is the whole foundation of my hope.”

Moreover the Blessed Virgin exercises the apostolate in Purgatory. She is the most powerful Mediatrix of the Souls in Purgatory.

St. John Vianney, the Cure of Ars, was a sincere friend of sinners and of the Souls in Purgatory. Through his efforts many obstinate and desperate sinners were reconciled to God. This holy Cure had many extraordinary gifts of God: he even had an insight into the occult.

A pious woman went to the Cure of Ars and sadly told him of her husband's sudden death. She feared for his soul, because during life he had not practiced his religion and had died without having had time for confession. Crying, the poor widow said she feared her husband's soul was lost. But,

remaining silent and pensive for a few minutes, the Saint replied: "Pray for your husband's soul. He is awaiting suffrage in Purgatory. You did not tell me that your husband used to help you gather flowers and arrange them into bouquets for the Blessed Mother's altar. For this simple homage, Our Lady obtained for him at his death, contrition and salvation. Pray for his soul."



In her apparitions to the three shepherds at Fatima, the Blessed Virgin always asked for prayers and penances for sinners.

Whenever the Venerable Pallotti, the Apostle of Rome, would go to visit the dying, he would recite the Rosary while going. St. Clement Hofbauer, Apostle of Vienna, attributed the conversions he obtained among the sinners and the dying to the Blessed Mother. Before dealing with them, he would recite and have others recite a part of the Rosary.

St. Alphonsus de Liguori was wont to say that among all the sermons given by the Redemptorist Fathers, the most fruitful was the one about Mary's mercy.

A holy Bishop frequently praised the Venerable Pallotti's Priests for the many conversions made during several Spiritual Retreats, and he would

add, smiling: They have the Blessed Virgin at their disposal: She does whatever they ask of her. (Levezou de Vesins.)

In 1836, the Most Holy Virgin obtained such a great conversion that it was the occasion from which was born the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart of Mary for the conversion of sinners.

Notwithstanding the many labors of the zealous Pastor of the Church of Our Lady of Victory, the fruits of his parish were scarce: only a few women went to church and frequented the Sacraments. The rest of the population, exclusively occupied with material and sinful things, were heading with great strides toward their spiritual ruin. But the Blessed Mother was watching over them, and, when the propitious moment arrived, she showed her tender mercy and maternal care. On the morning of December 13, 1836, while beginning the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the Pastor felt very oppressed by a strong feeling of discouragement: all his efforts appeared to be useless and he thought it well to abandon everything. But, upon reaching the Canon, after having invoked the help of God and of the Most Holy Virgin, he heard a voice within him say: "Consecrate your parish to the Most Immaculate Heart of Mary". At that instant, as if by magic, peace and serenity returned to him. After Mass, he drew up a Constitution, sub-

mitted it to the approval of the Archbishop and inaugurated the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart of Mary for the conversion of sinners. The Pastor expected about fifty persons to attend the inauguration, but he saw five hundred. Many conversions took place and within a brief period of time that population became very fervent.

The Confraternity of the Sacred Heart of Mary for the conversion of sinners was extended to other churches and at present is scattered throughout almost the entire world.

Thus, constantly bringing repentant hearts to her Divine Son and obtaining graces and forgiveness for all, the Blessed Virgin fulfills the noble mission of **Refuge of sinners**.



What sweet and loving words Mary's intimate friends know how to speak of her mercy, in order to prevent desperation from entering and taking possession of hearts which have abused the divine mercy with obstinacy and black ingratitude toward God, by covering themselves with filth!

In many cases one seems to see in God only His justice: then Mary alone is our refuge.

The certainty with which the man of action speaks of our celestial Mother, Refuge of sinners, opens our hearts to hope.

The Cure of Ars at times met sinners blinded by a disastrous illusion: they made themselves strong in some exterior practice of devotion to the Most Blessed Virgin Mary in order to tranquilize themselves and to continue in sin without fearing the flames of Hell. The Saint's words would become inflamed, irresistible in order to point out to that poor wretch the monstrosity of that presumption, so insulting to Mary, and to excite him to rise from the mire of his faults, and to continue his devotion to Mary, but with the end of overcoming sin, of correcting his way of living and leading a life pleasing to the Most Blessed Virgin.

In similar cases, the apostle, who is little devoted to Mary, will only find harsh, cold words: the poor sinner will therefore abandon the last hope of salvation. But for the apostle who is her devotee, Mary becomes the real and maternal influence that medicates, removes, heals, saves, sanctifies.

This is Mary's most beautiful glory: to change great sinners into saints and apostles.

When St. Theresa of the Child Jesus was only fourteen years of age, she already felt an ardent thirst for souls. One day she read in the paper that a certain Pranzini had been condemned to death because of several crimes he had committed.

It was feared that he would go to his death impenitent. Seized by a great desire to save that soul from eternal damnation, Theresa began to pray very fervently. More than anything else, she offered to God the treasure of Jesus Christ's merits and the prayers of the Church for Pranzini's soul whom she called "her first sinner". In her simplicity, St. Theresa not only asked for his conversion, but also for an external sign of his repentance. Her prayer was granted. Pranzini had refused to go to confession and was about to be executed when he suddenly turned to the Priest who was accompanying him, took the Crucifix from the latter's hands and kissed the sacred wounds three times while the Priest pronounced the words of absolution.* From then on, St. Theresa repeated Our Lord's words to the Samaritan woman: "Give Me to drink". (John 4: 8.) St. Theresa felt a great thirst for souls and, with prayers and mortifications she sought to console Jesus for the thirst He had suffered on the Cross.

The present time is preparing a solemn acknowledgement of Mary's universal mediation, of her duty as Dispenser of graces, of her universal apostolate.

Jesus Christ disposes the centuries and leads history to turn and converge humanity toward His

Father. It seems that He desires to reserve the major conquests of the apostolate to the Blessed Virgin, granting them to those who live intimately united to her: "By thee he hath brought our enemies to naught". (Judith 13: 22.)

The true son of Mary will always find new ways of solving the most difficult situations, new works and initiatives according to the needs of the times, words to console the disconsolate, the ways of salvation and of life.

CHAPTER XXII

CELESTIAL APOSTOLATE: THE SANCTIFIER

“With death life is changed, but is not destroyed”. The good soul, first given hospitality in the body, is then given hospitality in the celestial home. It is an entirely different way of living, but it is life: a supernatural and eternal life; life of the true son of God by adoption. It is a continuation of the same apostolate.

St. Louis, who on earth diffused the perfume of purity, from Heaven protects the innocent.

St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, who on the earth prayed and suffered for the Missionaries, now in Heaven is the “Patroness of the Missions”. St. Thomas Aquinas inspires and enlightens students of sacred studies.

Mary was the Apostle on earth; now she is the Apostle in Heaven. On earth she performed the most complete apostolate; in Heaven she fulfills a universal apostolate. Could she forget the children who were recommended to her by the dying Jesus?

The first part of her apostolate is to remove evil, crush the devil; the second part is to infuse good, to make Jesus Christ live in the souls.

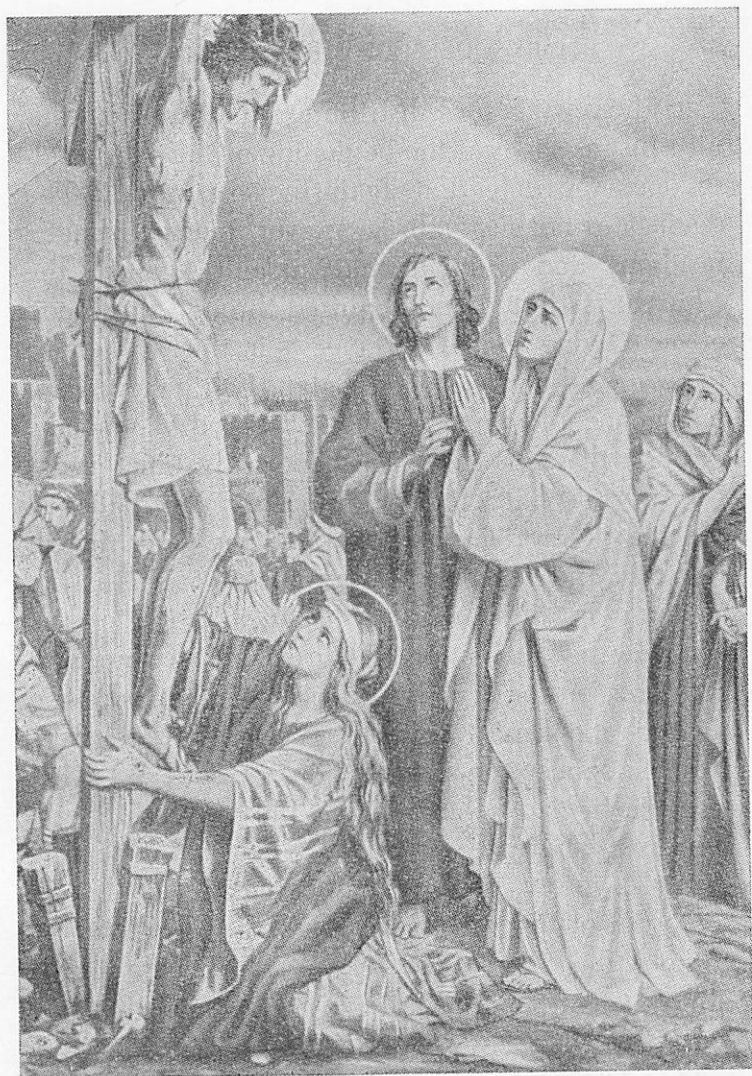
Among the evils she overcomes, the first is: error, heresy; then vice; and lastly false cults.

We can understand why the Church sings with joy: "Rejoice, O Virgin Mary, because you have extinguished every heresy in the world". We will pray for the unity of Faith among Christians: "That Thou wouldst bring back all the erring to the unity of the Faith. . . ."



In his Encyclical "Adjutricem", Pope Leo XIII writes: "After Mary was assumed into Heaven, according to divine designs, she began to protect the Church and to help all as a solicitous Mother. According to her limitless power, she became the dispenser of all graces, in such a way that, as she was Minister of the mystery of the Redemption, so she is perennially the Minister in the distribution of its fruits. Thus in Heaven Mary continues her apostolate which is more fecund and powerful than that of all the other Saints.

"The greatest gift is faith, foundation and root of all merit. Without it, it is impossible to please God. Faith is 'the first step toward God'. This is eternal life: that men know God and Him Who was sent by God: Jesus Christ."



**“He said to His mother, “Woman,
behold thy son.” Then He said
to the disciple, “Behold, thy mother”.**

John 19, 26-27

Mary asks for, distributes and defends this gift. Just as she is at the beginning of this gift, so also does she defend it against every assault. The devil does not instigate a graver, more obstinate, insidious and fundamental assault against the Church, instituted and acquired through the Blood of her Divine Son. It all consists in this: Either we believe God or we believe Satan. Eve believed Satan: hence all ruin. Mary believed God Who spoke through the Angel Gabriel: hence salvation. In her Liturgy the Church says: "Because you believed the Angel Gabriel, you generated the God-Man in virginity and remained always virgin". This is the meaning of these words: the Incarnation of the Word is the foundation of Christian Doctrine; and is the reason for which we must believe. God came to teach men in His Son: "Last of all in these days God has spoken to us by His Son". (Heb. 1: 2.) Mary was the first to believe in the Incarnation: She is the first, the great Faithful One; not only in the order of dignity, perfection and merit, but also in the order of time. After her came St. Elizabeth, St. Joseph, the Shepherds. It was Mary who introduced into the world the Christian Faith from which is all salvation. "Blessed art thou who hast believed," said St. Elizabeth to Mary. Therefore all was fulfilled: the Son of God took on human nature, became our Master, our Priest, our King. And

he who does not believe this is anathema; that is, excluded, cut off from that current of blessings which has its power house at Nazareth, and which began to function on March 25, and continues to distribute light, energy and vitality to all those who connect themselves to it in the Church.

The devil cuts the wires in order to stop this current from flowing: he sows heresies and above all he shatters the unity of faith. The Jansenists cancelled from their breviary the verse referred to above. The first heresy in the world is that of Satan: "You will be similar to God". Many philosophers and learned men of all times were deceived in their pride by similar insinuations of the devil to the point of believing in the goddess of Reason. Detached from Jesus, from Mary and from the Church, they wandered in the darkness and through many paths without arriving at the light. The worst and most unhappy among them are the heretics. Whenever new heresies broke out, Mary always intervened. Heresy is the devil; Mary crushes his head. According to a good author of dogmatic theology, the extinction of every heresy must be attributed to Mary in two ways: objectively and subjectively.

Objectively:

1) She gave birth to Jesus Christ: In Him there is every truth. She is the Mother of truth; because

Jesus Christ is the Truth: "I am the Truth". Heresy is error. Light defeats the darkness. By bringing the light, Mary dispels all darkness.

2) Mary is **Immaculate**, that is, she enjoys the unique privilege: exemption from original sin. She is the **Mother of God**; through her we have the union of the human nature with the divine nature in unity of person. Mary is a **Virgin**: behold the prodigy that opens the series of prodigies which prove the divinity of Christ and the truth of His doctrine. Mary is **assumed** into Heaven; first-fruits of humanity deified in Christ; distributor of celestial gifts for the communion of Saints. The principal dogmas, therefore, are from Mary, in Mary, with Mary, through Mary. Looking at Mary, these dogmas are read, loved, embraced and believed. She is an immense book; she contained and contains the Gospel which she offers to all, as she presented Jesus to the Shepherds and to the Magi.

She is an ineffable way: much more perfect than that which St. Paul expressed when saying of his children: "You are our epistle".

St. Gregory Nazianzus calls Mary the "President of faith".

St. Cyril of Alexandria calls her: "Scepter of the orthodox faith".

St. Andrew of Crete calls her: "Bulwark of the Christian faith".

St. Sophronius calls her the: "Exterminator of heretical perversity".

Subjectively or personally:

Mary, made Queen of the Apostles, enkindled them with zeal for the propagation of the Gospel and of the Truth.

She successively assisted the defenders of Christian Doctrine, as Pope Leo XIII mentioned when speaking of St. Dominic.

According to the needs of the times, Mary gave rise to and formed men of high doctrine, great sanctity, who explained and defended Christian dogma from various assaults.

St. Athanasius was called the hammer of Arianism; St. Leo, the hammer of Eutychinism; St. Augustine, the hammer of Pelagianism; Pope St. Pius X, the hammer of Modernism. These champions of Catholic truth prayed to Mary, were guided by Mary and won with Mary.

The unhappy Patriarch of Constantinople obstinately denied the divine Maternity of Mary: he taught that in Jesus there are two natures and two persons; that Mary, therefore, was the Mother of the human person and not Mother of God. He trampled on the privilege which is the foundation of all of Mary's privileges.

The error was formidable and the propaganda was intense. The Bishops became alarmed: and the Blessed Mother, on the other shore of the Mediterranean had prepared her apostle, St. Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria and successor of St. Athanasius. He arose in the name of the Pope and of the Church to confute the unfortunate Nestorius, disgrace of St. John Chrysostom's See.

St. Cyril defended the Catholic truth: that is, that in Christ there is only one Person, and Mary is truly the Mother of God. He wrote a powerful treatise against Nestorius: "The Anathematisms". From these were extracted the most beautiful lessons which we read in the office of the Queen of Apostles, in which St. Cyril calls Mary, "the shield of the orthodox faith".

The proud and stubborn heretic did not bend, and in the year 431 the second Ecumenical Council was convoked at Ephesus, the city which had given hospitality to the Virgin Mother of God and John the Theologian. Pope Celestine delegated St. Cyril to preside in his name. The Council defined as dogma of Catholic faith that "the Most Holy Virgin is called and is truly the Mother of God".

At a late hour the doors of the sacred assembly were opened and to the multitude that impatiently awaited the event, the condemnation of Nestorius and the definition of the Catholic truth

was announced. Then the Antiphon was sung: "Hail, O perpetual Virgin, you alone have always crushed all the heresies in the whole world"; and a great, limitless, indescribable ovation pervaded the city; and "the population of Ephesus, which was full of ardent devotion and love for the Virgin Mother of God, acclaimed the Fathers with a happy effusion of spirit and, providing themselves with lighted torches, the multitude accompanied them to their dwelling", wrote Pope Pius XI.

The heresy was overcome and the crown of Divine Maternity shone more brightly, more amiably and more impressively on the head of the Virgin Mary.

The Council added the second part to the Angelic salutation: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death."

Nestorius was exiled and ended his days with his tongue eaten by worms. Cyril, for the honor of the Blessed Mother suffered imprisonment because of the false accusations of Nestorius, but the Christian world was forever saved.

In 1931 all the Church celebrated the fifteenth centenary of the glorious event: in Rome a Marian Congress was held and Pope Pius XI published the very famous Encyclical "Lux veritatis".

We read in the Breviary: Leo III, the Isaurian Emperor of Constantinople, had undertaken a

fierce battle against the cult of images; he despised them, destroyed them, accused the Catholics who venerated them of idolatry. St. John Damascene opposed him with words and writings, explaining the reasons of the Church. The Emperor had the Saint's right hand cut off. But the Virgin intervened, operating the prodigy of restoring his hand as healthy as before. With redoubled fervor, St. John wrote in favor of Catholic doctrine.

St. John Damascene merited the title of Doctor of the Church, by laying the foundation of that clear and ordered exposition of our dogmas, as we have it in St. Thomas Aquinas': "Summa Theologica".

In the twelfth century the Mother of God prepared for the Church another great teacher and doctor: St. Albert the Great.

Inspired by Mary, this Saint had entered the Dominican Order, but then, seeing that he could not succeed in his studies, he had decided to abandon all. But the Most Holy Virgin encouraged him, promising her assistance and good results. In fact, he made great progress in a short time. He was one of the great luminaries of wisdom and sanctity, so much so that he was called the "Universal Doctor". He was one of the greatest theologians and had, as his pupil, St. Thomas Aquinas, the "Angelic Doctor".

In the not too distant past we find the most famous "Moralist Doctor": St. Alphonsus de Liguori. Most devoted to the Mother of God, he wrote the well-known book "The Glories of Mary"; a book known everywhere, having been translated in all the most noted languages. Moral theology was placed upon good bases, treated organically and defended from the assaults of the devil.

The Venerable Pallotti said that, for the conversion of non-Catholics and of heretics in general, it is very helpful to restore among them the devotion to Mary, to whom they do not pray. The Blessed Mother is the way to Jesus. They no longer find the way to go to Jesus Christ. The Catholics, instead, have as their maxim "Through Mary to Jesus".

It is especially helpful to invoke Mary as Queen of Apostles or as the Immaculate Conception.

In the Annals of the "Japanese Missions" we read a moving episode on the conservation of the Christian faith among those inhabitants. On August 15, 1549, the day of the Assumption of Mary Most Holy, the indefatigable Apostle of the Indies, St. Francis Xavier, entered Japan in order to preach the Gospel, placing his mission under Mary's protection.

Within a few years a good number of fervent Christians entered the Church. Jesuits, Dominicans,

Augustinians, Franciscans labored with abundant fruit in the Japanese territory. But from 1617 to 1652 a frightful persecution broke out. About a thousand religious and two hundred thousand Christians suffered horrible tortures.

From that epoch, there existed in Japan, a carefully preserved prophecy that the Catholic faith in Japan would not perish and that, after the persecution, other missionaries would arrive to spread the Gospel. In fact, because of the new relations between Japan and the Western Powers, in 1861, the Missionaries re-entered the "Land of the Sun".

When the little Chapel of the Mission was opened at Nagasaki, the old faithful hastened with curiosity to assist at Mass. And stupified, they exclaimed: "They do as our Priests did!" Then the image of the Immaculate Conception attracted all their attention.

When the Mass was over, those Christians asked the new Missionaries three questions: **Did the Bishop of Rome send you? Are you married or continent? Do you love the Mother of God?** Satisfied with the answers, with great joy they prostrated themselves upon the ground to thank God for having sent them true ministers of the true God. In their turn the Missionaries were happy to meet Christians who had remained faithful amidst the many persecutions, for the space of two centuries.

It is calculated that the descendants of the ancient Christians were forty thousand. This is a proof of the divine assistance to souls faithful to God. It is also a sign of the mercy of Mary who preserved their faith intact. She is a mother: she always assists her children, especially if they are in serious difficulty. Those Christians asked: "Do you love the Mother of God?" Hence they themselves were devoted to this Virgin and believed that the true Missionary can be recognized by this sign of love for Mary.

As long as one prays to Mary one does not fall into error; nor follow heresy; Mary is the standard of the faith, the seat of wisdom, the Virgin most faithful. The Church of Jesus Christ is only one. Jesus Christ did not found many Churches. In the first place unity consists in the unity of faith; then in unity of regime and of charity. Let us pray that Mary ask for her Son's great desire: "that they may be one"; all united in the same faith. Let us second all the invitations and initiatives which aim at unity.

CHAPTER XXIII

MARY AND THE APOSTOLATES OF THE MOVIES AND OF THE RADIO

It is sorrowfully true that every invention, discovery, and human improvement is exploited for the diffusion of error, vice and irreligion. And this frequently happens before the good use them for good purposes! It is human malice which renders the wicked cunning. Yet both the motion pictures and the radio have opened new and very vast possibilities for the religious apostolate. Apostles are needed! Christians who profess a false modesty, a prudence which poorly hides indifference, who do not understand the times, who do not know how to profess an integral Catholicism . . . lend themselves to the devils play: leaving the field to be occupied by the sowers of weeds.

We must combat the press with the press; the films with films, and the radio with the radio. The Pope precedes with example and with words.

Mary, because she was the most interior soul, was also the Apostle of her time. That was a time of very profound revolution: nothing less than the transition from the Old to the New Testament. Je-

sus Christ accomplished the greatest social, spiritual, religious, legal and moral revolution. In all fields and quarters He acted as in the Temple when, taking a whip of chords, He drove out those profaners. Mary followed Him. She cooperated. The Synagogue was declining; the Church, the daughter of Mary, was born in the Cenacle with Mary. The preaching of her Divine Son abolished the Old Law, the cult revealed unheard-of mysteries, foretold a new Religion with Ministers, Sacraments and Legislation of its own. Mary took the part reserved to the Teacher, Model, Queen of Apostles; to the Mother of Jesus, to the Coredemptrix, to the Mediatrix . . . in short: Jesus is the Apostle, Mary is the Apostle.

Mary had holy audacities in the most humble and strongest form. She had holy hope against all human prevision. Her love was stronger than death: a strong woman, a strong Apostle.

Let Catholics arise, because the putrid waters of the sea of wrong are rising and are menacing to submerge all institutions, all holy truth!

Roschini, today the most esteemed writer of Mariology, asks himself: "Did the Most Holy Virgin follow her Divine Son on His various apostolic peregrinations? The Gospel does not answer anything, at least expressly. The common answer, however, and better founded, is that **ordinarily**,

Mary followed Her Divine Son in various apostolic journeys across Galilee, Judea, Trans-Jordan, and so on"; and he gives the various reasons to confirm it. The "many women" who followed the Divine Master, according to all probabilities, "had to instinctively gather around Mary, as the Apostles and disciples did around Jesus". "Was not Mary the inseparable companion of Jesus?" "She followed Jesus not officially as Mother, but as all the other Pious Women, as the least among them, to listen to Him and serve Him, hiding herself as much as was possible in the crowd, so as to avoid attracting the attention of the multitude to herself and thus let Jesus alone stand out while she remained in the shadow. Furthermore, her modest manner, her delicate kindness, her sober speech, her love for concealment, her passion for sacrifice served greatly to strengthen, especially in the group of Pious Women who followed Jesus, the admirable effects of the divine Word."

Mary's life had to appear to all as the faithful echo of the words of Christ, the **Gospel in action**. Ordinarily, therefore, the Most Holy Virgin followed her Divine Son in the three years of His apostolate, sharing, in various places, (at Bethany, for example) the hospitality given to Jesus. Such is the opinion of St. Epiphanius (IV century), who wrote: "Mary was Jesus Christ's perpetual com-

panion and was not divided from His company". Thus she too became, within the permitted limits of her condition, the Conqueror of souls, with the apostolate of prayer, of example and of word. Jesus acted in public; and she, as Heart of the Church—hidden and active—acted in secret. Both were consecrated to the service of humanity. A beautiful example of her apostolate of the word is her exhortation to the attendants at the marriage feast at Cana: "Do whatever He tells you". Besides Mary's admirable intervention at the marriage feast at Cana, in the Gospel Mary is mentioned only four times during the public life of Jesus (excluding the Passion); twice during the first year, and twice towards the end. We recall two.

Jesus had preached: "Now His Mother and brethren came to Him; and they could not get to Him because of the crowd. And it was told Him, 'Thy Mother and Thy brethren are standing outside, wishing to see Thee'. " (Luke 8: 19-20.) And Jesus took this occasion to say that He also had a spiritual family, of which all those who listen and practice the Word of God are members. It is more meritorious and honorable to belong to this family, to become members of it, than to be united to Jesus Christ with the ties of blood.

At another time a woman, having seen the prodigies and heard the divine word of the Master, exclaimed in devout joy and admiration for Him

and for His Mother: “ ‘Blessed is the womb that bore Thee, and the breasts that nursed Thee’. But He said, ‘Rather, blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it’.” (Luke 11: 27-28.) In these two episodes it is remembered that besides the honor of being the natural Mother of God, Mary had an even greater fortune: that of hearing and practicing the Word of God. By ordinarily following Jesus in His preaching, Mary thus had a double exaltation from her Divine Son, while He elevated all His hearers to desire the immense dignity of adopted children of God, “whoever does the will of My Father in Heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother”. (Matt. 12: 50.) Doing the will of God renders us brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ. But the apostolate makes us fathers and mothers of souls.

Mary therefore teaches a holy revolution. Think of the three fecund apostolates: the press, radio and motion pictures. The Pope called us:

1) His Holiness, Pope Pius XI, writes in regards to this in the Encyclical “*Divini Illius Magistri*”:

“More than ever nowadays an extended and careful vigilance is necessary, inasmuch as the dangers of moral and religious shipwreck are greater. . . . Especially is this true of impious and immoral books often diabolically circulated at low

prices; of the cinema, which multiplies every kind of exhibition; and now also of the radio, which facilitates every kind of reading.

"The problem of the necessity of these new and urgent apostolates has already aroused, among the Catholics from all parts, a praiseworthy fermentation of thought and of action. The results are already consoling and there is still much to be expected. The voice of the Church which is Teacher and Model of every apostolate and the various needs of society will indicate the suitable means and the convenient forms so that the 'Word of God may be propagated and glorified'."

The Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, speaking to the journalists of the United States reminded them of the duty of always diffusing the truth both with the written and spoken word:

"An editor, writer or speaker who is conscious of his high vocation and of the responsibilities attached to it is always mindful of the obligations that he has towards the thousands and millions of persons who can be strongly influenced by his words, of giving them the truth, nothing else but the truth, as far as he has been able to ascertain it.

"But what must We say of deliberate falsehood and of calumny? 'The Lord hateth a lying tongue as well as hands that shed innocent blood: and the just shall hate a lying word.' (Prov. 6: 17,

13: 5.) Calumny is furnished with swift feet, as you know, especially to the shame of the guilty, when it is directed against religion and the champions of the most rigid exigencies of Christian morality; the denial and the defense of the victim frequently are not listened to, or at most can find a little corner after a week or so in one of the inside pages of the newspaper.

"The members of such a profession who do not hesitate to soil their pages or to corrupt the atmosphere with falsehood, cause great disadvantage to their fellow men; they direct a mortal blow at the spirit of the children of the same celestial Father and place the peace of the nations in serious danger. If the competent civil authority, when necessary requires it, does not succeed in restraining such licence, civil society will suffer for it without a doubt.

"The world trembles, today, in contemplating the mass of calamity by which it has been crushed. Could not the cause of all this be the current error and false moral maxims propagated by the written or spoken word of proud and ambitious men? May God strengthen you in your proposal to serve your profession and your fellow men in a worthy manner: may He help you to contribute to the sanctification of the family and to the defense of the moral foundations of human society."

2) "Everyone knows," affirms Pope Pius XI in the Encyclical 'Vigilanti Cura', "what damage is done to the soul by bad motion pictures. They are occasions of sin; they seduce young people along the ways of evil by glorifying the passions; they show life under a false light; they cloud ideals; they destroy pure love, respect for marriage, affection for the family. They are capable also of creating prejudices among individuals and misunderstandings among nations, among social classes, among entire races.

"On the other hand, good motion pictures are capable of exercising a profoundly moral influence upon those who see them. In addition to affording recreation, they are able to arouse noble ideals of life, to communicate valuable conceptions, to impart a better knowledge of the history and the beauties of the Fatherland and other countries, to present truth and virtue under attractive forms, to create, or at least to favor, understanding among nations, social classes, and races, to champion the cause of justice, to give new life to the claims of virtue, and to contribute positively to the genesis of a just social order in the world."

To a group of Motion Picture exponents Pope Pius XII said:

"It is therefore upon you, gentlemen, and the other associates of your profession, that the serious

responsibility rests of safeguarding and defending the screen from men of little conscience, who might desire to use it to propagate half truths, to give a disproportionate and unreasonable pre-eminence to certain details barely touching on or omitting the others, so that those who see the films will necessarily be led to false and perhaps disastrous conclusions for the harmony which should reign among all the members of the dear human family."

And, in reference to a film scene, the Holy Father adds:

"At times We wonder whether the directors of the motion picture industries fully realize the vast power they have of influencing social life both in the family and in the larger city communities. The eyes and ears are as spacious avenues which lead directly to the soul of man and they are opened wide without being invited, by the spectators of your films.

"What is it that enters from the screen into the intimate recesses of the mind where the fount of wisdom of youth grows and where the norms and motives of action that will mold the definite character are formed and stimulated? Is it something that will contribute towards making them better citizens, industrious, lovers of the law, God-fearing, who find their joy and recreation in wholesome pleasure and relaxation?"

3) The word of the Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, to the exponents of the radio quoted once before:

“More than fourteen years have passed since Our Predecessor of saintly memory personally inaugurated the Vatican Radio Station. In doing this He was accompanied by Marconi, who had designed and supervised its construction, and the two first words were of thanksgiving to God Who had given man the power of discovering and perfecting the mechanism through which the human voice is carried to the furthest ends of the earth and is heard by men of every nation, people and tribe under the sun.

“Like all human inventions, it may be used as an instrument of good or of evil. It has been used and is used to disseminate calumnies, to mislead the simple and non-informed, to disturb the peace in nations and among peoples.

“This is to abuse the gift of God and it is the duty of the directors responsible, as far as possible, to impede and eliminate this. May the good done by the radio always surpass the evil, until the latter may become annoying and fall by itself. Is this hoping too much? Certainly it is a noble end worthy of the best endeavors of man, and this is Our fervent prayer while We ask God to bless you and your dear ones at home.”

It is necessary to place these three apostolates under Mary's protection. Shall we, after so many trials and illusions, still be persuaded that life can be given by matter? Live without life? Souls, as the apostolate, have life only from Jesus Christ: and the fount is always in Mary's womb. You will not have children without a Mother.

O, little men, do you expect to find a better way than Jesus Christ? Now He taught us with example by passing in Mary, and then with the words addressed to the Apostle John: "Behold your Mother". And Mary, because she recognized that John was not the only apostle of whom she would be the mother, but the representative of all, immediately after the Ascension, in the Cenacle, took care of the Twelve. And then, throughout the centuries, she has cared for thousands and millions of apostles.

CHAPTER XXIV

MARY AND THE FEMININE APOSTOLATE

“My God, since I am not destined to be Your spouse, I will embrace the matrimonial state in order to fulfill Your most holy will! Give me then, I beseech You, many children and may they all be consecrated to You!” Thus prayed the mother of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus. Nine flowers blossomed from that conjugal union: four soon flew to Heaven among the Angels. The other four flowered in the fragrant garden of Carmel and one in that of the Visitation. Among them all, the most beautiful flower was St. Theresa.

Woman has a great mission in the family. This is her first and personal field. When speaking to the Women of Catholic Action in 1922, Pope Pius XI said: “Your particular resolution is the defense of the family in all circumstances which threaten to offend it, a defense which is religious, moral, cultural, economic and any other which might be added. A defense which does not limit itself only to impede evil, but which more than anything else excites and multiplies the good. A truly worthy duty of yours is the family, which is the primary root of

society, sanctuary of all religious and civic virtues: private, public and political."

In the family, the woman is able to accomplish more, spiritually, than the man.

She can be an apostle as daughter, as wife and as mother.

As daughter. — It would seem that the duty of a daughter is simply that of humble obedience, and that it has nothing to do with zeal. In general, the first predominates. But zeal is also always possible, in some measure, at least; and frequently it is more efficacious because it is more humble. A girl may have zeal toward her brothers, parents, servants and outsiders.

Towards brothers. — Many girls, whose parents had passed away or were disabled, took their place and raised up their brothers physically and morally well, sacrificing everything for them; obtaining admirable results. Others united their efforts to those of their parents; they obtained much with their example, good words and persuasive manner. One of these girls was called the Angel of peace; she was almost venerated and always loved by her brothers whom she had conquered, little by little, with her generous dedication.

Towards parents. — She is not a teacher, but a submissive daughter. Prayer, the example of a re-

tired, pious, laborious life, and serene patience, console, edify, and elevate morally. Perhaps she will only have the consolation of seeing her parents die reconciled with God. But this is such a gain that her many tears and sacrifices were not useless.

Towards servants and neighbors. — The Christian spirit is shown with respect, love and charitable care for dependent persons, neighbors and people whom one has to deal with frequently. And all these duties performed well always make religion and religious persons loved and esteemed; they console in the alternate vicissitudes of life and uplift one's thoughts to Heaven. At home, in society, in the office, the good girl diffuses a perfume which enkindles admiration and the more sincere and natural this is, the more she gains.

As wife. — It has been written: "Men make laws, the women manners". Man gives bread to the woman; the woman gives man faith and joy. Eve dragged Adam into sin; St. Cecilia converted her husband, Valarian, meriting the title of active bee from Pope Urban; the unfaithful man is sanctified by the faithful wife. There is only one road after that of prayer: to win her husband's heart with true goodness. Man does not permit himself to be dominated by money, ingenuity, pretexts: but he

becomes a docile child when taken by way of the heart. Goodness is made up of virtues, renunciations, kindness, patience and attentions which manifest the internal, true affection of the heart.

Will she succeed in leading him away from evil? Will she lead him on the right road? Many women have succeeded; many succeed daily. And how often the woman has succeeded in getting her husband to cooperate more efficaciously in the education of their children! And when the latter feel the united strength of two: that of maternal goodness and that of paternal authority, they walk much more easily on the right road.

As mother. — A mother always has a decisive influence in the formation of children. She transfuses her blood, her sentiments, her faith, her piety, her life. It is true that her work encounters many difficulties, but it is also true that man is formed on the knees of his mother. Instruction, the heart, corrections, vigilance, guidance, good example, prayers . . . these are the powerful means which a woman possesses. De Maistre wrote: "When a mother has made the Sign of the Cross on her son's forehead, vice might cancel it for an instant, but it will not destroy it".

Blanche, the mother of St. Louis, King of France, said to her son: "I prefer to see you dead rather than to know that you have committed a single mortal sin".

The highest ideal, the greatest merit, the largest apostolate for a woman, daughter, wife, or mother is that of contributing in giving to God Priests, Sisters, Missionaries, Apostles.

As Mary.—Mary received the Archangel Gabriel's visit. He proposed the divine Maternity to her. Mary was invited to become the Mother of Jesus Christ, the supreme and eternal Priest. From the Sacred Scriptures she knew well the offices of the future Messias: King, Teacher, Priest.

Mary needed one explanation: if with maternity she would have preserved her virginity. The Archangel reassured her: the Incarnation would be the work of the Holy Spirit.

And Mary pronounced her first: "Be it done unto me according to thy word". **She accepted maternity to become the Mother of the great Priest.** To maternity, many pure glories and many acute sorrows would be united, and this great Priest would call her "Mother" and obey her with loving submission; this great Priest would die on the Cross.

Mary carried Jesus in her womb and in her arms with love and devotion. During that time her charity increased always more. Her soul felt that it was associated with the mission of Jesus Christ. He is the Redeemer, she the Coredemptrix. Her most sacred Heart palpitated in harmony with the sentiments of the Heart of her Son. At the crib she presented the new-born Babe to Joseph and he

adored Him. She clothed her Son, nursed Him, and continued to give Him every care for thirty years. For that first Priest, for Him Who was born a Priest, born to offer Himself victim to the Father, she performed all the duties of the most devoted and tender Mother. She fulfilled her mission of Mother of the great Priest; she presented Him to the shepherds, representatives of the Hebrew people; she presented Him to the Magi, representatives of the Gentiles; she presented Him to the Temple as Host and Priest.

Later, at Cana, she saw to it that His Disciples believed in Him by obtaining the miracle from Jesus; she gave Him her consent to begin His public ministry, she followed Him on His preaching journeys. On Calvary she offered Him to the Father for the glory of God and our salvation. On Ascension day she gave Him back to the Father after having always accompanied Him in life.

The mother of the celebrated Cardinal Vaughan of Westminster (England) ardently desired that her children consecrate themselves to God as Priests or religious. For this she made an hour of adoration to the Blessed Sacrament every day. And her prayer was well answered by God; five of her daughters became Sisters. Of her eight sons, six became Priests: among these, one became a Cardinal and two Archbishops.

Another fortunate and holy mother was Zelia Bulhoes Pedreira Abren Magalhaes. She had nine children. Three became Priests: a Lazarist, a Franciscan and a Jesuit. The six daughters all consecrated themselves to God in various religious Orders. The mother, remaining a widow, entered the Order of the Sisters Adorers and died a holy death at Rio de Janiero in 1917. The regular diocesan process has been started with the hopes that she may be the first Brazilian saint.

The great Bishop Ketteler, of Germany, one day received various insistent requests for good Priests. He replied: "Yes, give me good mothers of families and I will give you good Priests".

St. John Bosco had a holy mother, Margaret, who prepared him for his great mission with a Christian education in every sense of the word.

As soon as the venerable Vincent Pallotti was born, his mother dedicated him to the Blessed Mother.

St. Augustine, Doctor of the Church, owes his conversion to his mother. He thanked God, saying: "My God, I owe everything to my mother".

The fundamental work for the Christianization of the world is this: that parents feel the lively desire to consecrate some children to God. If they enter matrimony with this aspiration and then always ask God for this grace, much will be done for

souls. Let them have a lively desire, a holy ambition, increase their holy efforts, permit their children to select their state in life; but let them surround their children with all care so that they may grow in innocence, virtuous and docile.

There are parents, good Christians, who love to have zealous Priests, but who do not want that their sons become Priests. They go so far as to oppose their vocation and with various pretexts and in many ways to dissuade them.

"A good and intelligent boy served my early Mass. I had fervently prayed that that boy should become a Priest. In fact, he soon showed his desire and manifested it to his father. At first the latter seemed happy; but then, for human interests he refused to give his permission. Six months later the boy died. The doctors could not give any explanation for the boy's death." (Erasmus).

Father Romen Faria, S.J., recounted: "Edward lived happily in the seminary, and he drew nearer to his ordination with joy and fervor. The Superiors nourished great hopes in him. But his father whispered to him: 'The medical career is better: you earn more money and your position is more respected'. The son was faced with a terrible struggle, but he finally yielded to the temptation. Ten months later Edward was stricken down by typhus. He died on the day he should have received Holy Orders."

"I want to make a saint of my son," said the mother of St. Athanasius.

"Thank You, a thousand times we thank You, O Lord, for having given us a Saint for our mother," said St. Basil and St. Gregory of Nyssa, at the death of their mother, St. Amelia.

Behold the joy of being the mother of a Priest described in a letter which the famous Father William Doyle, S.J., reproduces in one of his beautiful pamphlets:

"Dear friend, bless God with me, because now I am the mother of a Priest. When a son was born to me twenty-four years ago, I felt inundated with joy: I took him in my arms, frequently I would extend my hand over the crib to ascertain that my desires and my dreams were fulfilled. Yes, there was my son.

"But how different and more elevated is the joy that today fills my soul! Never have I felt such pure emotions. Now I am the mother of a Priest!

"Those tender little hands that I used to kiss so lovingly twenty-four years ago are now consecrated, destined to touch and handle the Bread of Life.

"That mind which, through me, received the first light is now placed at the service of God.

"That body, which I nourished and cured, passing many sleepless nights in watching, that

body now is sacred. Placed at the service of a Priestly soul, it will have to tire itself reconciling sinners, teaching the ignorant, distributing the Most Holy Body of Jesus Christ to those who approach to ask for It.

“That heart, that virginal heart which did not palpitate at the touch of another heart except mine, now is sanctified.

“When God will place in his way some misguided sinner, he will know how to speak to him words of encouragement which will recall him on the way of truth! Yes, he will pass by doing good; he will be a Priest according to the Heart of Jesus!

“Omnipotent God, thank You, thank You. . . . This Priest was mine. His soul received its character from mine and was enkindled with Your love by mine.

“From now on he is no longer mine but Yours. Protect him from even the shadow of evil. He is of earth, hence fragile; deliver him from all sin; do not permit him to ever offend You. O Almighty God, I love You and him; I respect him: he is Your Priest!

“At the moment of Holy Communion, seeing me approach the altar rail, the acolyte recited the ‘Confiteor’. The Celebrant turned towards me and lifted his hand: it was the absolution for his mother.

My son, moved to tears, with trembling hands, took the ciborium and came toward me. What an encounter! God, His Priest and I!

“Did I pray? I don’t know. A strange serenity dominated and held my spirit which burst forth into an ardent thanksgiving. My God! My son! Perhaps I am too happy. I have had happy days in my life, but none like this one. For the first time I conceive how we shall pass, with God, the endless moment of eternity. Adieu, I cannot describe anything else.”

Recollecting yourself in God, listen to and follow His inspirations.

CHAPTER XXV

MARY, MODEL OF THE FEMININE APOSTOLATE

Mary establishes her residence everywhere: in a heart, in a family, in a parish, in a region, in a nation. . . . She produces three fruits: she enlightens with her light which reveals to mankind all the principal dogmas: the fall of man; the Incarnation, the teaching, Passion, death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Most Holy Trinity, eternal life. She fortifies and elevates hearts to the great ideals of virtue, of purity, of the Christian Apostolate; dispenses graces of her Divine Son, consoles hearts, turns souls toward Jesus Christ, the Church, Heaven.

Devotion to Mary has decisively contributed to elevating the status of woman. De Maistre has written: "All the ancient laws despise the woman, they degrade her, molest her, and more or less maltreat her".

Among the Latins, although advanced in civilization, the sex now called that of grace, beauty and devotion, was then defined as "weak, inferior in work, of little value, vain", in opposition to the

sex of intelligence, strength, majesty: "majesty of man". It was the echo of God's sentence: "Because thou hast done this . . . thou shalt be under thy husband's power, and he shall have dominion over thee". (Gen. 4: 14, 16.) Ecclesiasticus has these words: "From the woman came the beginning of sin, and by her we all die". (23: 33.) From sin comes all evil: and Eve introduced it into the world.

And, as a logical consequence: from her who was not stained by original sin, comes all good. Woman was reinstated: humanity knows what it owes to woman. It is sufficient to look at Mary. In the story of humanity, she is as an apparition who binds and elevates everyone. It is an image of what takes place in Heaven: Mary enraptures the Blessed: "A great sign appeared in Heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon was under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars". (Apoc. 12: 1.)

What a salutary impression: to think that woman is the sex to which Mary belongs: from whom came Jesus Christ: "Of her was born Jesus Who is called Christ". (Matt. 1: 16.) Who would despise woman from the moment that he invokes Mary, Deliverer, Consoler, Protectress? Who thinks of Mary, terror of demons, Queen of Angels, stronger than armies? Consequently the peoples will forgive woman for the ancient error, for the

love of her who, by nature, grace and glory, "is the highest of creatures". The chivalry which so honored woman is the fruit of the Christian spirit. "

It is said of Blessed Henry Susone that, "Traveling through a narrow country path, he encountered a poor woman and stepped aside into the mud to let her pass. The woman turned and asked him: 'Why is it, Father, that you, a Priest, should give the right of way to a poor woman like me? It should be the contrary'. Blessed Susone answered: 'It is my habit to honor all women because they remind me of the holy Mother of God who is in Heaven'. Lifting her eyes heavenward, the woman exclaimed: 'And I pray the Queen of Paradise to grant you every grace before death, since you honor her so much in a woman'. The good Priest answered: 'So may the most pure Virgin Mary help me from Heaven'." (Ioergensen.)

Woman, enlightened by Mary's light and virtue, learned to elevate herself in her life and in her mission. From her images, Mary tacitly repeats to women the admonishment of St. Augustine and St. Jerome: "O woman, you must not fail to know your dignity, because the Son of God was born of a woman. Acquire a holy pride." (De Agone: and "To the virgin Eustochius".) The new woman, formed at Mary's school, knew how to be superior to Eve; she kept herself worthy of her mis-



“And the women who had come with Him from Galilee, followed after,
and beheld the tomb, and how His Body was laid.” Luke 23, 55.

sion. Let us remember what they were: St. Monica for St. Augustine; St. Scholastica for St. Benedict; St. Clare for St. Francis of Assisi; St. Jane Frances de Chantel for St. Francis de Sales; St. Louise Marillac for St. Vincent de Paul, and so on. The Christian woman exercised a celestial fascination on man.

But more admirable still is the elevation of woman to martyr, virgin, apostle, heroine of charity.

The woman martyr. — Mary is Queen of Martyrs. For this reason the weaker sex, attracted by her example and sustained by her grace, became the strong sex before tyrants and persecutors: St. Lucy, St. Agatha, St. Agnes, St. Thecla and many, many others. The Church invites us to admire them as prodigies of fortitude: "O God, Who among the marvels of Thy power hast given the victory of martyrdom even to the weaker sex...". What courage the contemplation of the Sorrowful Mother standing at the foot of the Cross and pierced in the depth of her soul by a sharp sword awakened in those souls!

The woman virgin. — The pagan woman almost always presented a nauseating spectacle of frivolity and corruption. Mary, instead, with her immaculate purity, at all times, exercised a powerful attraction on the simple and pure souls. In Pris-

cilla's cemetery, a painting (which seems to date back to the second century), shows "a Bishop, assisted by the deacon, handing the veil to a sacred virgin; at the same time, he is indicating as a model the Most Blessed Virgin represented with Baby Jesus in her arms". (Marucchi.)

In the writings of St. Ambrose, Mary is pointed out as the radiant ideal of the Christian virgin. (*De virginibus.*) In the Gregorian Sacramentary, the virgins, as soon as they have received the veil, are entrusted to the Mother of God: "So that they may always remain immaculate under the mantle of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary". (Muratori.)

To the virgins Mary offers the fruit of her sanctity: the wheat, the bread which germinates virgins.

The woman apostle. — Mary "diffused the eternal light, Jesus Christ, in the world". "Reascending to the Father, the Divine Master left His school and His chair to Mary, not that she was to govern the Church, the office reserved to the Hierarchy, but that she might teach the disciples the celestial wisdom learned from the beginning." (St. Thomas of Villanova.) Down through the centuries she has always propagated the flame of the apostolate and multiplied the apostles. The catechists, the Sisters in the schools and in the missions, many girls and women of Catholic Action exercised an admirable

apostolate throughout the entire world. St. Thecla, many women of apostolic times, St. Nonna, St. Monica, St. Marcellina, St. Pulcheria, St. Helen, St. Eudocia, St. Placida, St. Paula, St. Marcella, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Theresa of Jesus and St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, are names which reveal hearts modeled on Mary's apostolic Heart.

The charitable woman. — The first heart of woman that palpitated with love and communicated the divine flame to all her sex was that of Mary. The Sisters learned it from her; and in the Orient they are often called Marys. Throughout the centuries Mary's incomparable charity excited imitators: women who give their lives in hospitals and asylums; who feed and clothe innumerable poor people; who contribute to vocations and to divine worship with their possessions and holy efforts. The Tabites, the Domitillas, the Paulas and Elizabeths and millions (this is not an exaggeration) of women, young girls and Sisters, are the glory of the Church, the living defence of Christianity, the true daughters of Mary.

Radiant and ardent flame. — Pope Pius XII, January 1, 1947, said to the Catholic women and girls:

“Nevertheless, firmness of faith and courage in action still do not suffice for your desires; they

must enkindle in your hearts the radiant and ardent flame of zeal. Resolute as you are to fully practice the holy law of God in your lives of maidens, of wives and of mothers, you want to collaborate in the field in which circumstances, prepared by Providence, have placed each one of you to lead souls back to the sole Lord and Master, to render them, in submission to the divine Will, in docility to the infallible doctrine, in sanctification, through grace, the only true liberty which sets them free from the humiliating slavery of error and of evil. Such is the meaning of the entire work of the redemption, and every apostolate; regardless of its form it is nothing else than the participation in that redemptive work of Christ.

“To want to draw a clean line of separation between religion and life, between the supernatural and the natural, between the Church and the world, as though these had nothing to do with one another, as though the rights of God had no value in all the multiform reality of daily, human and social life, is completely alien to Catholic thought, is openly anti-Christian. Hence, the more obscure powers increase their pressure, the more they seek to banish the Church and religion from the world and from life, all the more is a tenacious and persevering action necessary on the part of the Church herself to reconquer and submit all the fields of

human living to the sweet empire of Christ, so that His spirit may breathe upon it more abundantly, His law rule there in a more sovereign manner, His love triumph there more victoriously. Behold that which is to be understood as the Reign of Christ.

"This office of the Church is very difficult; but they are nothing but irresponsible or deceived deserters who, in homage to a misunderstood supernaturalism, would want to restrict the Church to a 'purely religious field', as they say, while by so doing they are favoring her adversary's game.

"Against such currents you courageously react, as it is suitable in our times. Therefore, with satisfaction We have learned about your formation, your experiences, your happy successors. We praise your alacrity and invoke upon you the fullness of the strength and of the grace of Christ."

CHAPTER XXVI

THE APOSTOLATE OF VOCATIONS

Christian mothers,

May your greatest honor and your supreme merit be that of giving a son to God, either as a religious or as a Priest. Or else, to give a daughter to God as a Sister. Better still would it be, if your child were to be a Missionary Priest or a Missionary Sister. Let this be your continual desire and your continual prayer.

To offer one's child to God, as Mary offered the fruit of her womb, is a great merit. It is the giving not of flowers, candles or money, but of your own treasure. Upon showing her children, each mother can say with legitimate satisfaction: "These are my pearls, my jewels, my precious stones".

A thousand times unhappy the home which, through the parents' fault, is not gladdened with the merry chatter of a nestful of children! Therein is sorrow, egoism, lack of an end in life and in labor; a solitary and desolate old age, death in abandonment, oblivion, a tomb without tears and without prayers.

If parents permit Jesus to select the flower which pleases Him most from among their children,

behold: a bit of their blood has pleased God and has been found worthy of Him!

Supreme honor.—Generally, a vocation signifies that: in that family there is faith, morality, love of work, order. A good son is the honor of his parents and a proof of their virtue.

Source of graces.—Blessings are showered upon the home which has given a son or daughter to God, joy and guarantee of many celestial graces. If the sacrifice was more acutely felt, but made with faith and love, it is also a sign of salvation.

Comfort at the hour of death.—When there is a religious vocation there is certainty of leaving someone who will certainly honor the deceased parents with a decent funeral and will pray for the repose of their soul. For these parents there will be a special reward in Paradise, because God is a debtor to that mother; just as Jesus Christ is a debtor to Mary, who clothed Him with human flesh.

The religious vocation is merited for the children with loving care during the period of their formation.



As science has shown, the child inherits from its mother some of her character and many of her sentiments and inclinations. And if this mother desires, if it is God's will, to have a son a Priest, will

she not communicate and imprint this tendency in her little creature? So too, how her prayers will prevail on the Heart of God! Nature and grace will cooperate for the same end.

As soon as the child is born, it is immediately placed under the mantle of the Virgin Mother of the great Priest. Words, examples, objects, prayers, all that mother's education form a favorable atmosphere so that a vocation may be born, develop and manifest itself.

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All the attention and care are used to protect the little child from sin and to instil in him piety and virtue.

Hence she teaches him, follows him, corrects him, keeps him away from bad companions, motion pictures, theaters, amusements, bad schools; in short, she keeps him far from all dangers. She starts him off to church, to catechism to good schools. With him she prays; she listens to him, scrutinizes his sentiments, and ever more decisively, though sweetly, fortifies him in virtue. She awaits in silence; she examines his tendencies in order to see whether one day there will be a sign of a vocation. She is prudent and does not insist importunately; but lets her son understand that, if one day he were to ask to become a Priest, he would find his mother happy to consent to it.



Moved by great fervor, the mother of St. Athanasius one day said: "I am striving, with the help of God, to make of my only son, a man of the Church". And it is due to her prayers and counsels that that son became a pillar of the Church and a strong defender of the divinity of Jesus Christ.

Another mother, whom we venerate on the altars, is St. Nonna. As soon as her child was born, she consecrated him to God and placed a copy of the Sacred Scriptures in his hands. This child became a great interpreter and expounder of the Holy Bible and an outstanding Doctor of the Church.

A youth, at first good, had become totally perverted because of his bad companions, and had ended up in prison. The advices and prayers of his good mother had not succeeded in making him repent. The poor woman suffered so much that she became ill. She was nearing the end of her life. Therefore she begged the judge to give her permission to see her son at least for a moment. Accompanied by two guards, he was taken to her. The mother did not say a word to him, but gave him a severe and beseeching look. Back in prison, the young man soon received news of his mother's death. But that look of reproach and of invitation had its effect. He repented and confessed himself.

His period of expiation over, he changed his way of life; he became a Jesuit and a great preacher; above all, he obtained outstanding conversions. It is Father Stasslacher, who often relates this example.

Margaret, St. John Bosco's mother, was the exemplary educator of this apostle of youth. Her good example, many prayers, wise counsels, many sacrifices worked on John's well disposed heart and soul and turned him more and more toward the Priesthood and the Religious state. When John would ask for counsel, Margaret would answer: "I desire nothing of you except this: that you assure your eternal salvation". One day John had decided he would become a Franciscan. The Pastor, knowing that John's mother was poor and a widow and probably would need him, thought it his duty to warn her. Margaret then spoke to John and said: "Our Pastor came and told me that you would like to become a religious. I only desire that you examine yourself well and think of the step you would like to take; then follow your vocation without thinking of me. First of all comes the salvation of the soul. The Pastor would want me to dissuade you in view of my needs. I tell you that when dealing with vocations, God is everything. . . . I expect nothing from you. I was born poor and I am poor; I desire to die poor." And Don Bosco became a Priest and a religious and the father of many religious.

Words of the Pope on the collaboration of the family in vocations:

“...But the first and most natural garden where the flowers of the Sanctuary should blossom almost spontaneously, is always the truly and profoundly Christian family. The majority of the holy Bishops and Priests ‘whose praises the Church declares’ (Ecclus. 44: 15) owe the beginning of their vocation and of their sanctity to the examples and teachings of a father filled with faith and masculine virtue, of a chaste and pious mother, of a family in which, with purity of manners, love of God and of neighbor reigns supreme. The exceptions to this rule of ordinary providence are rare and do nothing but confirm the rule itself. When in a family the parents, following the example of Tobias and Sara, ask God for a numerous posterity in which God’s Name may be blessed forever (Tob. 8: 9), and receive it with gratitude as a celestial gift and as a precious deposit, and do their utmost to instil in their children, from the very first years, the holy fear of God, Christian piety, a tender devotion to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and to the Immaculate Virgin, respect and veneration for sacred places and sacred persons; when children see in their parents the model of an honest, laborious and pious life; when they see them love one another holily in God, see them frequent the Sacraments,

obey not only the laws of the Church regarding abstinence and fasting, but also the spirit of voluntary Christian mortification: when they see them pray at home gathering the entire family about them so that their common prayer may rise more pleasing to Heaven; when they know them to be compassionate of the miseries of others and see them share with the poor the much or the little which they possess, it is quite difficult that, while all will seek to imitate the paternal examples, that at least one of such children will not feel in his soul the Divine Master's invitation: "Come, follow Me" (Matt. 14: 21), and "I will make you fishers of Men". (Matt. 14: 4: 19.) Fortunate are those Christian parents who, even if of these divine visits, of these divine calls made to their children they do not make them the object of their most fervent prayers, as more frequently than today happened in times of greater faith, at least they do not fear them, and know how to detect in them an outstanding honor, a grace of predilection and election of God for their family!" (Encyclical on Priesthood)

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God asked of Abraham his only son. St. Monica obtained with her tears and prayers, that St. Augustine, her only child, be converted: she prepared him for the Priesthood.

Mary had an only Son, the handsomest and dearest of sons, and she offered Him to God.

The children are not for the parents, but the parents are for the children. If the child is an only one, the merit is also greater. For if the family is extinguished materially, your son will be the father of many spiritual children who will owe gratitude to you also. In general, the vocations which have cost the greatest sacrifice turn out to be more fruitful.



If you deny him to God, cannot God take him from you? He belongs to Him. Is it not possible that entering the world he may be deprived of graces, be perverted and perhaps become your cross? Or that perhaps God will deny you many temporal and spiritual graces?

To impede a son from following his vocation is a very grave sin which cries for vengeance.

If a son or a daughter makes known the desire to consecrate himself or herself to God, at times a storm breaks loose on the part of the parents. And at times the latter call themselves Christians and practicing Catholics.

God is to be obeyed before parents; parents do not have the right to oppose their children in the selection of their vocation. It is a natural right.

Children first belong to God and then to their parents.

He who prefers father, mother, brothers or sisters to God is not worthy of Jesus Christ: he sins.

"Follow Me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead" (Matt. 8: 22), answered Jesus to a youth who had received the call but asked to first go to his father's funeral.

At the age of twelve, Jesus remained at Jerusalem unknown to Mary Most Holy and St. Joseph to hear the Doctors of the Law and give a sample of His future mission and vocation. To Mary, who asked Him the reason for this, He answered that in this He was free.

"Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" (Luke 2: 49.) Which means: When it is a question of God, of the mission, of a vocation, the parents' permission is not necessary, as long as the boy or girl has been assured by the Confessor that he or she has been called by God.

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Pope Pius XI's words on this subject are very clear: "It must be confessed, unfortunately, that often, too often, parents, even those who glory in being sincerely Christian and Catholic, especially in the more elevated and better educated classes of society, do not seem to be able to resign themselves

to the Priestly or religious vocation of their children, and do not make it a scruple to combat the divine call with all kinds of arguments, even with means that can expose to danger not only the vocation to a more perfect way of life, but the very conscience and eternal salvation of those souls which should be so dear to them. This deplorable abuse, as well as that which evilly prevailed in the past centuries, of forcing children into the ecclesiastical state even when there was neither the vocation nor the aptitude, certainly is not an honor to those same higher social classes which are now so little represented, generally speaking, in the ranks of the clergy. Because, if the dissipations of modern life, the seductions which, especially in the large cities, prematurely excite the youthful passions; the schools in many regions so little favorable to the development of similar vocations, are in great part, the cause and sad explanation of the scarcity of religious vocations in such wealthy and noble families, it cannot be denied that this argues a tearful diminution of faith in the very families. In fact, if things were looked at with the eye of faith, what greater dignity could Christian parents desire for their children, what nobler ministry than that which, We have said, is worthy of the veneration of men and of Angels? A long and sorrowful experience, then, shows that a betrayed vocation (do not think

the word too severe) is a fount of tears not only for the children, but also for the inconsiderate parents; and God forbid that such tears be too late, as to become eternal tears." (Encyclical on the Priesthood.)

But I only have daughters . . . In this case let your prayer be: that God deign to give the religious vocation to one of them.

However, the flowers for the Church must be cared for with diligent attention, so that they may be beautiful to the eye, pleasing and fragrant. The best must be given to God, never the left overs. . . . Cain offered to God the poorest fruits of the earth, Abel the best sheep of his flock, and God accepted Abel and rejected Cain. It is necessary to give God the best sons and daughters. It would be a grave insult to the Divine Majesty to give to the world the best flowers of your family garden, the most holy, the most intelligent, and so on; and to reserve for God the most backward, the defective and the sickly. Give the best to God! An injustice done to God can take away many blessings from your home and even draw punishments upon it.

But I don't have any children . . . Then: Pay a steady burse for a student who aspires to the Priesthood. Offer to God an adopted son.

An elderly couple said: "God did not give us any children, even though we greatly desired them. So we have saved up the money which would have been necessary to support and pay for the studies of three. This money we now give to you, Reverend Father, to pay for the studies of two religious Priests for our country and a Missionary Priest for the missions."

A good father once said: "I had a son very dear to me. He became ill; we gave him the best of care, but God took him to Himself: may His adorable Will be done! But now I give you the sum and the portion of the inheritance which would have been his. In suffrage, pay for the studies of a Priest who will take my son's name; I will love him as a son and provide him his every need. My only desire is to ascertain for myself that some of his Masses will be for me after my death."

CHAPTER XXVII

QUEEN OF PRIESTS

Mary has for the Church that same love, care and duty which she had for Jesus Christ. The Church is Mary's daughter as Jesus Christ is her Son. Having ended on Calvary her duty toward Jesus, she was given, by the dying Jesus Himself, the same duty toward His Mystical Body: the Church: "Behold thy son". She was given the duty of generating the Church, of raising her, of defending her, of enlightening her and of sanctifying her. Christ is one: considered physically or mystically; and one is the Mother, the Coredemptrix, the Mediatrix: Mary.

First condition to become children of God: believe in Jesus Christ: "So that those who believe in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting": Faith.

Second: The state of grace, which is life.

Third: To follow Jesus Christ, according to His Commandments and His example. Mary is Mother and Queen of the faithful; as also Mother of grace and of the redeemed; and is also Mother and Queen of all the Saints. She invites, supports, defends and comforts on the road to sanctification all the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors and Virgins.

But Mary's first and principal duty always regards ecclesiastical vocations; as Mary's first and principal duty during her earthly life was to prepare the Shepherd, the Priest, the Pontiff: Jesus Christ.

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The Christian people is the flock; the Priest is the shepherd. Man is a sinner: the Priest is the mediator. Religion must have a sacrifice, the Priest offers it. Eternal life is had in the Sacraments, the Priest is the minister of them. The root and foundation of salvation is faith, the Priest is its teacher. Man must walk in justice toward Heaven, the Priest is the guide.

The Priesthood is a great dignity, a great power, a great responsibility. That is why according to God's plan of redemption, Mary is at the head of this work. Religion cannot exist without the Priesthood. When there are many holy Priests, all good things are diffused: truth, virtue, grace, peace, justice, science and Christian culture. "The Priest continues and perpetuates Christ for mankind; all the ministry of the Divine Master: the Way, the Truth and the Life. His treasures are the Gospel, the Eucharist, the Church".

Mary had the fullness of grace to be the Mother of the great Priest. Consequently she possesses the graces for every Priest.

She prays the Lord of the harvest; her supplication is the expression of a will.

Mary calls and forms the Priests.

St. Andrew Corsini was called to the Carmelite life by Mary, to become a Priest and Bishop of great perfection.

While still a youth, St. John Bosco had many revealing dreams: a large number of boys whom he wanted to make good; and he succeeded when a most amiable Lady taught him the way and comforted him with her graces. Our Lady Help of Christians was the star Apostle of youth.

St. Joseph Benedict Cottolengo was preserved innocent, received an increase in intelligence, was led to the altar, and was guided by Mary in all his admirable works.

Only through Mary did St. Albert the Great persevere in his way to the Priesthood. He became a great Bishop, universal Doctor and teacher of St. Thomas Aquinas.

St. Thomas conserved himself a virgin, persevered with heroic fortitude in his vocation, penetrated the doctrine of the Church and became a great luminary. The secret was his most tender devotion to Mary.

St. Francis de Sales was the meekest and strongest Priest; Bishop of inexhaustible zeal, writer and preacher of true devotion; a prodigy be-

cause of his prodigies. Why? He overcame his trials by making a vow of reciting the entire Rosary daily, and he kept his vow.

St. Alphonsus de Liguori was Doctor of moral Theology, the founder of the Redemptorists, the indefatigable popular Missionary, the outstanding and most humble Bishop. The explanation for all this may be found by everyone in his book: "The Glories of Mary", in which he transfused and revealed his Marian devotion.

Mary assists, enlightens, comforts the Priests. She renders their apostolate fruitful. No one needs her help more than the Priests, and it is Mary who gives them the greatest help and the most consolation.

Jesus promised the Apostles the invisible Consoler, the Holy Spirit.

Jesus left the Apostles the visible Consolatrix, Mary.

The affections in the Priest are not dried up, nor is the heart extinguished; let him love Mary; he will find a superabundance of joy, a most pure and most fecund consolation which will abundantly reward him for all he has left in the family.

Woman is the minister of natural life. In fact, Eve is the "Mother of the living". After original sin had been committed, God in the terrestrial Paradise, announced to Eve that her children would be

brought forth in sorrow. But He also announced that the woman would be the minister of the supernatural life. He declared it with such words that it would almost seem as though she were the principal actor: "She shall crush thy head," He said to the serpent.

God alone remains only and always the Source of grace and of life; Mary is the Minister. And it is thus that she gives us Jesus; she is the sweet Core-demptrix, and from Heaven she is the Dispenser of grace which is life. The words can be clarified for our poor intelligence: "She, through Him, will crush thy head".

On Calvary, by means of her Son, she crushed the head of the serpent.

We have an example in the life of St. John Bosco. By his faith and by his Priestly powers and his sweet fortitude, the Saint accomplished marvelous deeds. However, it was Mamma Margaret who formed him, supported him and accompanied him in the beginning. It can be said that the many sons of Don Bosco received all from Mamma Margaret.

The Holy Fathers compare the union between the Divine Word and the Most Holy Virgin to the union between a husband and his wife; sometimes they call Mary "The Spouse of the Word"; or:

"Spouse of the Word Incarnate". St. Ireneus and St. Justinian base their expressions on the relations between Adam and Christ, Eve and Mary.

Doctor Scheeban explains, saying that, on the one hand, Mary, as Mother, gave Jesus Christ His Body and Blood, but then she united herself to Him and cooperated with Him to acquire, with suffering, the life of grace for souls; as well as to share aspirations, interests, life and mission with her Jesus. Hence Jesus and Mary accomplished, though with a different office, an identical mission. Jesus and Mary have always loved, with particular affection, Priests and apostolic souls who share in their same saving mission. The relationships between Mary and Jesus Christ, the High Priest, and the Priest is better understood from this prayer by His Excellency Morganti, Archbishop of Ravenna, to Mary, "Virgin and Priest".

"O Mary, Mother of Mercy, Mother and Daughter of Him Who is the Father of mercies and the God of all consolations,¹ Dispenser of your Divine Son's treasures,² Minister of God,³ Mother of the High Priest Christ, and you yourself Priest and Altar,⁴ Immaculate Temple of the Word of God,⁵ Teacher of the Apostles and of the Disciples of

1) Richard of St. Lawrence — 2) St. Bernardino — 3) St. Bernardino da Busto — 4) St. Epiphanius — 5) Blossias — 6) St. Thomas

Christ,⁶ protect the Supreme Pontiff, intercede for us and for our Priests, that the Supreme Priest Christ Jesus, may purify our hearts and we may thus worthily and piously approach His Sacred Banquet.

"O Immaculate Virgin, who not only has given us the Bread of Heaven, Christ for the remission of sin,⁷ but yourself are the most acceptable Victim immolated to God⁸ and the Glory of the Priesthood⁹ and who, through the testimony of your most blessed Servant, St. Antoninus, although not invested with the Sacrament of Holy Orders, were filled with every dignity and grace that such a Sacrament confers; for which reason you are given the title of Virgin and Priest¹⁰. Oh! Look with pity upon us the Priests of your Son; save us, purify and sanctify us, so that we may holily partake of the ineffable treasures of the Sacraments and merit to achieve the eternal salvation of our souls. Amen.

"O Mother of Mercy, pray for us.

"O Mother of the Eternal Priest, pray for us."¹¹

All Christianity allied to form Priests; all Priests for all humanity. Every Christian family should sigh for a Priest of its own blood or at least of adoption. Let each Christian contribute to the Priesthood

of Villanova — 7) St. Epiphanius — 8) St. Andrew of Crete — 9) St. Ephrem — 10) Epistle of His Holiness Pius IX, August 25, 1873.

11) 300 Days Indulgence.

thus: with labor, prayers, offerings, and much more than the amount we contribute to public officials. As the bees in a beehive, all work to form themselves a queen.

For this purpose a society "Queen of Apostles" for vocations was suggested, its aim is to call everyone to cooperate in this fundamental necessity for souls, for the Church, for humanity.

1) Its end is double: a life of union with Mary; the procuring of many and holy vocations in every parish for all ministries and apostolates.

Ideal: Every parish should give at least one Religious, one Priest, one Missionary and one Sister.

2) Means: Pray to the Queen of Apostles, look for vocations, inspire them, guide them with instructions, education and collection of offerings, assist them even when they will have already entered their field of apostolate, pray for deceased Priests and Sisters.

3) Members: Everyone may be a member: Priest, Sister, youth, adults.

4) Promoters: In every parish and Institute there is a Promoter who has the care of the registrations, raises subscriptions to the periodical "Queen of Apostles", enthuses the subscribers and guides their activities.

Duties: Daily prayer for vocations; monthly confession and Communion, co-operation according

to one's state in life, to one's vocation. The official periodical is the "Queen of Apostles", which serves to enlighten and guide all the activity of the society.

Organization: A general director "pro tempore" and one for each nation.

Suggested duties: Visits to good families of the parish, correspondence with good youths; diffuse vocation leaflets.

The center is at Rome, where perpetual adoration is held for the intentions of this society. The first Saturday of each month is dedicated to prayers for Priests. The members of each parish should form a group which elects a representative—a girl or boy—who are united to the national center which is in Rome.

Members may be found in every parish, Institution, and social classes. Crowds should not be sought for membership, but select groups of persons who are fervent and possess an apostolic heart.

The first part of the meetings is dedicated to the spirit; the second to the apostolate. Each group participates in the good of everyone, but enjoys autonomy. The meetings are monthly, and are held in the parish hall or other convenient place.

Father Roschini, in his "Life of Mary", points out that during His preaching, "Jesus acted in public; and Mary, as heart of the Church, hidden and active, acted in secret".

Rise, O sleeping man! The enemy takes advantage of the darkness to sow discord.

Rise, O Christians without a heart! See how many souls walk on the road to Hell!

The Pope's voice rings out, but we are deaf! Jesus Christ is cast out and cursed; Priests are killed, Bishops imprisoned, errors and irreligion are spread!

Rise from the sleep of death! Have pity on assaulted childhood, on assassinated youth, on womanhood precipitated into an abyss. Give to the Church, to society and to the souls, Priests of fire, saviors of men. This is the supplication which the Church extends to you. A million and six hundred thousand Priests are still needed.

Prayers

For the Propagation of the Faith

by the Ven. Servant of God Don Vincent Pallotti

Queen of Apostles and all the Saints, pray to the Lord of the vineyard that He send laborers into His vineyard and save His people; so that we all may be happy with Him and the Father and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

Prayer.—O Mary Immaculate, Queen of the missions, strengthen, with your powerful voice, our poor prayers, so that God may deign to call the erring children to the unity of the Church and to lead

to the light of the Gospel the many infidels who still populate the world. Sustain, O Mary, with all your maternal help, and render fruitful the apostolic hardships of our Missionaries who are scattered in all parts of the globe to point out to mankind the sure way which leads to eternal life. Amen.

Prayer for Missionaries to Mary Most Holy, Queen of the Apostles.—O Most Holy Immaculate Virgin, Queen of Apostles, Queen of all the Saints, gather under your most loving protection the preachers of the Gospel, their faithful, their teaching, and grant that, for your greater glory and that of your Son Jesus, they may shine with exemplary sanctity to the growing churches, and the neophytes preserve their baptismal innocence immaculate, in pure faith and growing fervor until death. Grant that the faith be widely diffused there also, as a reward for their sacrifices and sufferings, and here may it revive and be confirmed against all the strivings of irreligion and error in the countries they left behind. Dear Mother Mary, conceived without sin, hear us and obtain for us many and holy apostles, strong and fruitful action among the Gentiles; among us an increase of faith ever more lively and active, and the supreme grace of conversion of all those among us who have been led astray. Amen.

Queen conceived without original sin, pray for us.

CHAPTER XXVIII

DISPOSITIONS FOR THE APOSTOLATE

Fundamental principle: In practice, one cannot separate, in the true apostolate, one's own sanctification from zeal. The apostle produces fruits because he is a branch attached to the vine; because he is a stream nourished by the source; because he is a current of light and heat connected to the powerhouse.

The fruit is in proportion to the nourishment of the root; a supernatural nourishment, however, since we treat of fruits of eternal life. The apostle will bring his conditions; he will take care to work worthily and to attend to himself: the fruit will always come: visible or invisible, sooner or later. One saves even by dying: thus Jesus saved us by dying; St. Stephen obtained St. Paul's conversion; the blood of the Martyrs is the seed of Christians.

There are three dispositions which render the work of the apostolate certain and fruitful: abandonment in God, fortitude, chastity. In the Most Holy Virgin these are found in full.

Abandonment in God signifies generous labor, leaving to God the care of ourselves, of our health, of our reputation and of our future; even of the

external success or failure of our apostolate in the eyes of men.

It is most useful to remember what St. Gregory the Great affirms: "To detach ourselves from everything is not a great thing; instead, it is a great thing to detach ourselves from ourselves".

The personal abandonment of oneself in God is the requisite to become saints.

The apostle's abandonment in God is the requisite for the fruits of his sufferings and labors.

Jesus showed this abandonment in the hands of the Father: "But Jesus kept silence" (Matt. 26: 63), before His accusers. Admirable example, already foretold by Isaias: "He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a lamb before his shearer, and he shall not open his mouth". (Isa. 53: 7.) Even Pilate was surprised: "So that Pilate wondered". (Mark 15: 5.)

The apostle shall work with an ardent heart: the field may be arid or fecund; the devil may instigate oppositions and struggles; God may even be satisfied with only the desire; one may die as Jesus on the Cross. . . . But the personal merit will not go lost; the seeds sown will be able to germinate and fructify in thousands of ways. Let us always work and abandon ourselves in God, leaving the care of everything to Him Who alone can give growth.

Comparing his apostolic hardships with those of the other Apostles, St. Paul stated that he had worked more than all of them: he did not say this because of pride, but to give glory to Jesus Christ. He sowed the Orient with churches, yet in each of those churches that he founded, he gathered nothing but sufferings, contradictions, persecutions, scourgings and imprisonments.

These are what Jesus had announced when speaking to Ananias: "I will show him how much he must suffer for My Name". (Acts: 9: 16.)

This is not surprising, because the disciple follows the Master: "If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." Simeon had predicted of Jesus: This Child will be "a sign that shall be contradicted".

The Redemption is obtained by suffering: it is expiation, reparation, sacrifice, satisfaction: "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin". (Heb. 9: 22.)

Mary had to accomplish the greatest apostolate: in fact she had to be the Apostle. She declared herself the handmaid of the Lord, whom He could therefore freely dispose of. She accepted everything: She underwent continual trials: the refusals in Bethlehem, the flight into Egypt, the losing of Jesus in the Temple, the mysteries and sorrows of Jesus' private life: "Did you not know? . . ."

In Jesus' public life she frequently saw him contradicted, abandoned, ensnared. During the Passion, Mary's soul was pierced by a sword of sorrow. . . . Yet there never was a complaint, an opposition, a discouragement. Her abandonment in God was greater than her sorrow; her "may it be done unto me according to Thy word," never failed.

For a time all of Jesus' labor seemed completely destroyed: because the flock was scattered, the Apostles were fearful and in hiding, Jesus had died on the Cross, the enemy exultant for their momentary triumph. Mary was desolate, but not despairing. Each of her sufferings became an apostolate, light, life, salvation for souls: never, can we say, was she more certain of the Redemption of the world and of souls.

Jesus made her the Mother of men. Upon ascending into Heaven He left her to comfort the Apostles. Mary had to wait a long time before she could reunite herself to her most loving Son in Paradise. . . . Mary neither refused nor desired one thing or another: she only desired the will of God. She was most certain that everything was for the benefit of souls. Everything: triumphs and humiliations; joys and sorrows, all co-operate in the apostolate. When there is nothing else on this earth, there still remains the apostolate which is the most salutary: that of suffering. And when this ends,

the apostle goes to Heaven where he will exercise a new apostolate, more efficacious, more vast: that of intercession. "I will spend my eternity in letting fall a shower of roses on earth," said St. Theresa of the Child Jesus.

Fortitude: to support, immolate oneself and continue . . . not in fighting and in humiliating. **Fortitude** in persevering: "Bear fruit in patience". (Luke 8: 15.) **Fortitude** in always renouncing our own comfort, our money, our preferences: "I become all things to all men". (1 Cor. 9: 22.) **Fortitude** in always seeking new means, new ways, new co-operators. "I will most gladly spend and be spent myself for souls; even though, loving you more, I be loved less." (2 Cor. 12: 15.)

"Who will find a strong woman?" asks Holy Scripture. Her value exceeds all treasure, even the rarest. This signifies that a strong woman is rarer than a pearl or a precious stone.

In the Old Testament one of these rare and admirable women was Judith. With fine cunning, she was able to overcome Holofernes who threatened to exterminate Bethulia and all the Hebrew people. By killing Holofernes, she put the whole Assyrian army to flight. The city and the people of God were saved.



**“And all these with one mind continued
steadfastly in prayer with the women and
Mary, the mother of Jesus...”**

Acts 1, 14.

The Judith of the New Testament is Mary Most Holy who saved all mankind, consenting to the Incarnation and offering her Son, while He hung on the Cross.

Hence the hymns which Ozias, prince of the people of Israel, sang of Judith may well be applied to Mary. On the Feast of Our Lady of Dolors (September 15), the Church says: "The Lord hath blessed thee by his power, because by thee he hath brought our enemies to naught. Blessed art thou, O daughter, by the Lord the most high God, above all women upon the earth. . . . He hath so magnified thy name this day, that thy praise shall not depart out of the mouth of men who shall be mindful of the power of the Lord forever; for that thou hast not spared thy life by reason of the distress and tribulation of thy people, but hast prevented our ruin in the presence of our God." (Jud. 13: 22-25.)

Purity: Only pure souls are strong and apostles.

What explanation can be given for such courage and strength? It is given by the Scriptures themselves. The high Priest went from Jerusalem to Bethulia to thank Judith. He and all the people sang in one voice: "Thou art the glory of Jerusalem, thou art the joy of Israel, thou art the honor of our people. For thou hast done manfully, and thy heart has been strengthened, because thou hast loved chastity, and after thy husband hast not known any

other. Therefore also the hand of the Lord hath strengthened thee, and therefore thou shalt be blessed forever." (Jud. 15: 10-11.)

Judith herself swore before God that the Lord had not permitted her to be seduced by Holofernes' compliments; she had returned without sin.

It is easy to see in the Judith of the Old Testament the representation of the Judith of the New Testament; that is, of Mary Most Holy who remained fearlessly on Calvary and offered her Son to the Celestial Father in holocaust for the Redemption of the world.

The explanation of her heroism which made her the Queen of Martyrs, is also to be found in the purity and integrity of the most pure conception. From that very moment she crushed the head of the serpent.

Never was she the slave of the devil; from the first moment of her conception she always triumphed over the devil. St. Augustine says that this is a profound difference with Eve: For one woman it was death; for one woman it was life; because of Eve ruin; because of Mary salvation.

Next to Mary on Calvary we find St. John, one of the Twelve, the strongest and most courageous. He was the most beloved disciple because of his purity. The dying Jesus entrusted His Mother to

him: "Jesus Christ entrusted the Virgin Mother to John the virgin".

The Church prescribes the observance of celibacy to the Priests, in order that they may be free and may exercise their sacerdotal and apostolic mission with courage.

If we were to examine the lives of the Saints, of apostolic men, of the heroes and benefactors of humanity, we would find that they were strong because they were temperate and chaste.

The comment of St. Gregory the Great on the text of St. Luke's Gospel (12: 35) is instructive: "Let your loins be girt about and your lamps burning". "God wants two things: loins girt and lamps burning: be clean through purity, be ardent in the works of zeal."

"We cannot be pleasing to God when one of the two things is missing: either chastity or work. Hence one without the other is of no avail. But if both are present, one can be certain of his eternal reward."

Because of her purity, her strength and her zeal, the Virgin-Apostle is a model for all those who exercise some activity of zeal.

The chaste man is strong, because he knows how to dominate his own flesh, resist the attractions of the world, resist the seductions of Hell.

The chaste man is strong. Because of his purity he loves God and his neighbor as he loves himself, his own soul.

The chaste man is strong: hence he shows himself generous in accomplishing sacrifices in order to save others and sanctify himself.

Incontinence and impurity, instead, obscure the mind, weaken the will, enfeeble the judgment.

The impure person seeks the bodies instead of souls; seeks earthly pleasures instead of eternal goods. He loses the divine light which conquers and saves.

St. Paul writes: "The sensual man does not perceive the things that are of the Spirit of God, for it is foolishness to him and he cannot understand, because it is examined spiritually". (1 Cor. 2: 14.)

Of the pure the Divine Master said: "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God". (Matt. 5: 8.)

Conserved chastity or repaired chastity: it is really necessary in order to have the high sentiments of the Apostle, strength in working, divine blessings and efficacy over hearts.

A statue may be reproduced in two ways: either working the marble with a chisel, or prepar-

ing a form or mould and placing in it molten metal or soft plaster. The first method is long and difficult; the second easy, quick and pleasing. If the apostle forms himself on the example of Mary's apostolate, he will find it easy to efficaciously exercise his ministry on souls. Mary is the true mould or form for souls, thus perfectly prepared by the Holy Spirit. The souls committed to Mary's care are easily established in her and on her; the apostle will work easily, quickly and surely. Other ways are long, difficult and costly.

CHAPTER XXIX

MARY, MOTHER OF MANKIND

Give a Mother to mankind, O apostles of Jesus Christ, whether you are Priests or lay people, Religious or faithful or just men of right thoughts. Men have broken their relationship with God, they have provoked His justice, they have wandered away from Him on the crooked ways of error, evil and idolatry. How many groan and how many walk blindly toward Hell! Give to these children a loving Mother who will recall them, who will be the mediatrix between them and the indignant Father, who will enlighten, console and reconcile them . . . in short, a Mother. This is doing what the Divine Master did. When the perversity of mankind had reached its height and had accomplished deicide; when in the Temple of God the abomination of desolation had entered; when, the Pastor smitten, the entire flock of Christ, Apostles and faithful, were dispersed . . . Jesus Christ offered the hope, the salvation, the Mother: "John, behold thy Mother". From that day on, humanity was no longer orphan. The Apostles were reanimated; invoked with Mary, the Holy Spirit descended, the Church established herself under Ma-

ry's banner who precedes, and in the Name of Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life, the Church established herself everywhere.

Succor mankind; give it Mary for a Mother. Do as Jesus Christ did: the Marian apostolate.

The Marian apostolate is the supreme keep-sake and example of Jesus Christ. He has already given all: He had offered all the aids: doctrine, examples, Church, Sacraments, Blood. . . . There was still lacking one who, with the intelligence and heart of a Mother, would lead these children to the rich banquet, to the Fount of grace, to the Consoler, to the Master: behold Mary was chosen. Do we believe that we could do better and find ways more secure than Jesus Christ? Many precepts, counsels, ways, methods, and so on, are indicated . . . instead let us give the Virgin as Mother and keep to Jesus Christ's road of charity.

It is the great remedy. If you despair of everything, if you see yourselves weak before the powers of Hell, if there is obstinacy everywhere, if even the heavens seem closed to your sighs . . . nothing is lost, there still remains the last, but certain hope: Mary, our Mother. Why? It is her duty—to bring Jesus. Where Mary enters, the Son will follow. When the dawn breaks the sun will soon rise. Jesus is "the Flower of the Virgin Mother", "Blessed fruit of thy womb".

She is the great Mother.—The love of all the mothers put together, would constitute a great fire: but Mary's love for each of her children exceeds it. Jesus Christ ignited it from the Cross. She is the Cause of our joy, the Refuge of sinners, the Comforter of the afflicted, the Help of Christians, the Seat of wisdom, the Mother of Good Counsel, the Mother most Amiable; she looks after each and everyone as, when you enjoy the rays of the sun, you do not take away any from your brethren. "There is no one that can hide himself from its heat." (Ps. 18: 7.) She can put unhoped-for means into action; her power is unlimited, as her love is boundless; on the heart of God and on all creatures.



Let us often take refuge under the mantle of Our Lady Mary, according to the examples of the Fathers of the Church; let us invoke her as Mother of Jesus Christ and ours; let us all say to her with all our heart: "Mary, show that you are our Mother; may our prayer be heard by that Jesus Who willed to be your Son". Thus prayed Pope Leo XIII.

Christian faith teaches us to honor in Mary a double maternity; as it invites us to honor a double paternity in God. There is a maternity and a paternity of nature: thus God is the Father in respect to His only Son: "Today I have generated Thee";

and Mary is the Mother of Christ her Only-Begotten: "from whom was born Jesus". There is a paternity of adoption: we are said to be and we really are the adopted children of God; and there is a spiritual maternity: "O Lord, Who didst give us for Mother Thy very own Mother", prays the Church. Jesus Christ is the "First-born among many brethren". (Rom. 8: 29.)

We are Mary's children by adoption.

Mary Most Holy is our true spiritual Mother through grace, because she has given us spiritual life: "O Redeemed people, applaud the life given through the Virgin".

She conceived us to this life in the house of Nazareth, on the day of the Annunciation, when she conceived Jesus Christ, our Moral Head. Then she generated us on Calvary in the moment of Jesus Christ's death. There she was solemnly proclaimed our Mother by Jesus Christ: "Behold thy Mother". Hence St. Anselm invokes her. "O secure refuge, O happy hope; the Mother of God is our Mother".

According to Cardinal Lepicier, this may be called "Catholic truth" kindred to the faith.

Pope Leo XIII writes: "First of all let us humbly pray to the Most Holy Mother of God whom Jesus Christ Himself, from the Cross, assigned as the Mother of all mankind". And elsewhere he

wrote: "According to the thought of the Church, all mankind was represented in St. John".

Pope Pius XI wrote: "From the Cross, Jesus recommended all mankind to Mary, therefore she loves everyone, both those who do not know of the benefits of the redemption and those who already enjoy its fruits through the grace of God".

Pope Benedict XIV wrote: "The Catholic Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, has always applied herself to promote the devotion to and honored in many ways the Mother of the Redeemer and Queen of Heaven, who is also the most loving Mother left to us by Jesus Christ dying on the Cross".

Pope Gregory XVI: "Mary is our Mother; Mother of piety and of grace; Mother of meekness and of mercy, to whom Jesus entrusted us before dying, so that as He intercedes with the Father, so she will intercede with Jesus Christ".

God had great plans for Mary in regard to the Mystical Body of the Divine Master. Mary had co-operated with the Holy Spirit for the formation of the physical Body of Jesus Christ: "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; and therefore the Holy One to be born shall be called the Son of God". (Luke 1: 35.) Now she was to co-operate with the Holy Spirit for the formation of the Mystical Body:

the Church. It was born on Pentecost: Mary cooperated with the Holy Spirit invoked by the Apostles and the Most Holy Virgin for ten days. Jesus had said: "I will not leave you orphans", promising the **Consoler**, the **Paraclete**.

In a family the mother is the center, the heart, the life, the joy, the light, the consolation of the children; she is their interpreter, the mediatrix of peace with the father and among brothers.

The mother consoles in sorrows, dispels shadows, brings peace in disagreements and quarrels.

And this mission of Mother in the Christian family, the Church, Jesus Christ entrusted to Mary Most Holy.

This is Mary's **maternal and universal apostolate**.

St. Augustine says that all the predestined are carried by Mary in her bosom. She nourishes, raises, defends and leads them to eternal glory.

The word **Mother** is the summary of Mary's universal and maternal apostolate. It states that Mary accomplishes all the works of mercy, both spiritual and corporal, for her children.

The Mother is the queen of the family; because she is the Mother of the universal Church, Mary is the Queen of all the apostolates in the Church. Her office of Mother extends to Heaven, to Purgatory, to the earth.

The Marian apostolate means: to make Mary known, to imitate her and to pray to her.

To make Mary known.—This is what Jesus Christ, the Supreme Pontiffs and the Doctors of the Church did; innumerable writers, preachers, teachers, fathers and mothers, artists and the good faithful also do this. Marian literature is a river which flows through Christianity. The supreme work, however, is to make this literature known by the faithful. Diffusion is necessary. Too many treasures are buried in the bookstores. May Mary, the star which leads the erring and the ignorant to Jesus Christ, shine. Because this is the truth: there is much ignorance: they “sit in darkness and in the shadow of death”. (Luke 1: 79.)

To imitate Mary.—After Adam all are stained and disfigured by sin. Only Mary is the ideal of beauty, of candor, of light and grace which has enamored the very Heart of God, filled the Angels with admiration, inspired so many artists, won the most beautiful souls. To show Mary in her moral beauty means to banish filth and sin; it means to elevate the soul to higher ideals, to more saintly paths, to noble and celestial ways.

To pray to Mary.—We must sow the earth with churches, sanctuaries, chapels, altars, images and statues of the Blessed Mother. Let us diffuse im-

ages everywhere, teach many prayers and hymns, accustom everyone to have recourse to Mary in every need.

And what will you be able to do, notwithstanding your ardent zeal, if you are alone? That is to say, can you perhaps dominate certain systems, stop Communism, change the morality of radio and motion pictures, Christianize laws, schools, customs, disarm Hell?

It would be a doctrinal heresy to think this and a practical heresy to attempt it! Alone! Mary is, instead, light, strength and grace. She will always crush the devil's head, which is always rising up again at all times. Be wise, do not condemn yourself to illusions; follow the way taught us by Jesus Christ: "Behold thy Mother".

CHAPTER XXX

MARY, UNIVERSAL APOSTLE

To speak precisely, after Jesus Christ, **one is the Apostle: Mary.** All the others participate in the apostolate of Jesus Christ and of Mary; they have it in part, Mary has it entirely through Jesus, with Jesus, in Jesus Christ.

Our mind is too small and our words are insufficient, but we must say: even the Apostle Jesus was given to us by Mary. We therefore owe her our love, our gratitude: Thanks be to God! and to Mary! All depended on her **Fiat.** Thus it pleased God "Who willed that we should have all through Mary".

May the perfect devotion to Mary, preached with such wisdom and love by Saint Grignon de Montfort, be known and practiced. But it should be applied in everything, or at least in the main and principal point: more than anything else, Mary is the Apostle; let everyone be an apostle through Mary, from Mary, with Mary!

Devotion to Mary is a sign of predestination; more or less certain according as it is more or less perfect. Without a special revelation, no one can be certain of being predestined; but there are **signs and indications** among which the devotion to Mary

is one of the most certain. Thus teach St. Anselm, St. Bernard, St. Alphonsus de Ligouri, St. Antoninus, and others. Summarizing their doctrine, Millot writes: "The salvation of those devoted to Mary has become one of those practical truths which are demonstrated by the very persuasion of the faithful and the daily preaching of the sacred authors. God does not permit the universal error of the Christian people on a point regarding dogma or Christian perfection. . . ."

St. Peter Damien wrote: "On the day of Judgment, he who assured himself of the Most Holy Virgin Mary's protection during life cannot be condemned".

Whoever is a Christian and possesses God, permits this God Who is infinitely active and diffusive, to operate in him: Goodness, Truth, love tend to diffuse themselves as the light of the sun, the heat of fire, as potency in respect to action.

Appearing to His confidant, St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, Jesus Christ said: "Behold this Heart which has so loved mankind. . . . Now, not being able to contain and withhold the flame of this charity, it is forced to manifest it to mankind".

The apostolate is a great light and a great charity which shows itself because of plenitude, as when a great reservoir overflows when it is too full.



Mary is **the Apostle of all times**. She appeared as the hope of all humanity in the terrestrial Paradise when God announced her as the Woman, the Mother of a great Son, the Savior. It would seem that at that moment God wanted to give prominence to Mary's mission: "She will crush your head".

From that moment on, Adam and Eve and their descendants began to hope and desire the coming of this Woman who would give the Restorer of life.

When the fullness of time had arrived, behold Mary gave us the Savior of the world. "The Virgin gave birth to the Eternal Light, having the joy of maternity, and conserving the honor of integrity: a thing never granted before and which will never be granted again." (Ant. 2, at the Lauds of the Nativity.)

Through the centuries then, Mary, from her throne of glory and of grace, distributes graces; this means: she saves souls. She is the Apostle of all times until the number of the elect of the centuries will be accomplished.

Universal Apostle. — She gives everything, every good. St. Thomas Aquinas obtains and explains the knowledge of Jesus Christ-Truth, through Dogmatic theology; St. Alphonsus de Ligouri ob-

tains and explains the knowledge of Jesus Christ-Way, through Moral theology; St. Frances de Sales and St. John of the Cross obtain and explain the knowledge of Jesus Christ-Life with Ascetical and Mystical theology.

There are seven spiritual works of mercy: 1) to feed the hungry; 2) to give drink to the thirsty; 3) to clothe the naked; 4) to shelter the homeless; 5) to visit the sick; 6) to visit the imprisoned; 7) to bury the dead.

There are seven spiritual works of mercy: 1) to counsel the doubtful; 2) to instruct the ignorant; 3) to admonish the sinner; 4) to comfort the sorrowful; 5) to forgive injuries; 6) to bear wrongs patiently; 7) to pray for the living and the dead.

Mary gives us all this by giving us Christ. That is, she gives us the same tree from which these fruits hang. She is the chandelier which bears the lamp. "She diffused this light of truth in the world"; she is "the Seat of Wisdom". All must be restored in Christ; but the Virgin gave us Christ Himself.

Moreover: her intercession is universal: since she is the Mother of the entire Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, which is the Church. Man must live a supernatural life of faith, of hope, of charity on earth; being destined to see, to possess, to enjoy God. Well then, the work of revelation, of justification, of sanctification accomplished by Jesus

Christ has its beginning in that "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, may it be done unto me according to thy word; and the Word was made flesh in Mary; and lived among mankind". The goods that are in the Church come from Mary Immaculate's womb, from her Heart.

"If there is hope in us, if there is grace in us, if there is the principle of salvation in us, we know that all comes to us from Mary." (St. Bernard.)

Universal Apostle. — Many have been the Apostles, but all derived from Mary: light and comfort; vocation and fruit of the apostolate.

Jesus had called the first disciples; the latter had followed Him without understanding well Whom He was. The goodness of Jesus had, so to say, overcome them. But at Cana, through Mary's intercession, the great prodigy of changing water into wine was worked. Then the disciples believed in Him; they believed that He was the Messiah, God.

At the Ascension of Jesus into Heaven, bewilderment followed; but the Blessed Virgin, as "Heart of the Church" comforted, encouraged, and made them pray. Cardinal Lepicier said: "It can most assuredly be believed with certainty that the Virgin preceded all that which Jesus Christ did for the salvation of mankind; as it can be gathered, for example, from the descent of the Holy Spirit upon

the Apostles and Disciples, especially through the clear narration of the Sacred Scriptures". Thus under Mary's beneficent shadow they began their apostolic life.

This is repeated for all the apostles throughout the centuries.

Worthy of note is this principle of St. Grignon de Montfort, the genius of the true and perfect devotion to Mary: "It is through Mary that Jesus came to us; and it is also through Mary that we go to Jesus".

In the fifteenth century, St. Bernardine of Siena was the restorer of Christian life and of good customs in Italy in the Name of Jesus. His success is revealed in a confidence made by him, at the age of twelve, to his cousin Tobia: "I am in love with a very noble Lady; I would gladly give my life to enjoy her company; if a day should pass without my seeing her, I would not be able to sleep". The Lady was Mary.

In 1827, St. Joseph Benedict Cottolengo, a Priest of Bra, Italy, began in Turin, a work which is a living and miraculous monument of charity for the poor and of confidence in God. He himself is a prodigy of faith in Mary. Born near "Our Lady of the Flowers", while still a child he was already an apostle of Mary; he obtained intelligence for his studies from Mary; from Mary he learned of the

design of his mission; in the house, which contains 14,000 persons and is called **little**, Mary is everything: Doorkeeper, Econome, Comforter, Mother of Divine Grace.

St. Frances de Sales is the Apostle of Chablais and of true and sweet devotion. He had been offered to Mary before his birth. At Paris, at Padua, he was freed from grave dangers to his soul by Mary: he died with his baptismal innocence. Every day he recited the entire Rosary because of a vow. He converted Chablais, was a famous Bishop of Geneva, and a Doctor of the Church for his writings.

St. Francis of Assisi is the apostle of charity; but he is also the devoted apostle of Mary of the Angels.

St. Dominic is the apostle of truth; but he is also the pious apostle of the devotion to the Rosary.

St. John Bosco is the apostle of youth; but he is also the fervent and indefatigable apostle of Mary Help of Christians.

St. Ignatius began his great work at the feet of the Most Holy Virgin at the Sanctuary of Monserrat.

The Seven Holy Founders of the Servites began at the feet of the Most Holy Virgin.

St. Vincent de Paul began at the feet of the Most Blessed Virgin.

St. Alphonsus de Liguori is the author of the "Glories of Mary"; and is the Founder of the Redemptorists.

St. John the Evangelist was the first to reveal the Heart of Jesus; he is the martyr who died a natural death; he is the beloved apostle, the prophet of the Church, but he is also the virgin to whom Jesus entrusted the Most Holy Virgin, and he lived with Mary for quite a number of years.

Among the other Saints, we have four in particular as the special protectors and models of youth: St. Aloysius Gonzaga, St. Stanislaus Kostka, St. John Berchmans and St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows; they were entirely born, raised and sanctified by Mary and they behaved as true sons of Mary.

Mary also formed little apostles and women apostles.

Behold St. Bernadette Soubirous, the apostle of the Immaculate; she was chosen while still a young girl, when she had not yet received her First Holy Communion and did not know how to read or write. But she was already devoted to Mary.

Behold the three children, simple shepherds of Fatima, who became the apostles of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Behold St. Catherine Laboure, the apostle of the Miraculous Medal. Pope Pius XI said of her:

“For this soul, everything rests on a foundation of purity, of humility and of simplicity”.

Today there is a magnificent flowering of feminine Religious Institutions, of institutions for boys and girls, of institutions for women who have become courageous and humble apostles: in the schools, in charitable works, in the apostolate of the press, in the missions, in various branches of Catholic Action. All draw from Mary: She is light, comfort, teacher: She is the universal Apostle.

Mary extends her apostolate even to **Purgatory**. She does so in two ways: She makes them feel her tenderness by **mitigating** the sufferings of those souls who are fulfilling their last preparations for their entrance into Paradise. St. Vincent Ferrer says: “Mary is good for those who are in Purgatory, because from her they receive relief”. Moreover, she **accelerates** the end of their sufferings; and in this sense the Church prays for the dead so that, “Through the intercession of Blessed Mary ever Virgin they may arrive at the possession of eternal happiness”.

A great apostolate is that of the sick, rather, that of the dying. St. Joseph is their Patron. But the holiest of deaths was Mary's; and for this reason we always pray: “Holy Mary . . . pray for us . . . in the hour of our death”.

About one hundred and eighty thousand persons pass to eternity daily. On one's last sentiments depends an irremediable eternity. Mary hurried to assist her dying Son on Calvary; thus she hurries to the bedside of every dying person.

Mary has care of everyone: she does not have only one apostolate: youth, editions, missions. She has all of them and exercises all of them, assists all the apostles. She converts sinners, guides those who start on the way to perfection, takes care of the perfect. She protects the orphans, preserves the innocent from sin; gives strength to youth who combats, assists those called to the Religious and sacerdotal life, she inspires the betrothed and blesses the married couples; she extends her mantle over the newly-born child and over his parents who contemplate him in his crib. The old, the poor and the infirm are consoled by Mary. Rulers, teachers, Priests, Missionaries, judges, merchants, travelers on land, on sea or in the air: all profit from her care. Every grace comes through Mary, because Mary has every grace. She intervenes even in things which to us may seem to be unworthy of a Queen! She spared the married couple at Cana the shame of confessing their poverty when the wine gave out. St. Thomas says that she then showed herself Mediatrix of all grace. This explains why there exist over forty thousand volumes on the Most Holy Virgin.

In all the great works of the Church, in all her magnificent institutions, in all her initiatives of apostolate, seek the Woman: Mary. Oh! how grandiose the apostolic figure of Mary shows forth! She does not display herself in a determined field, but she gives us all the good. And if the world has some good, we must go to the source: it is Mary, as the principle is God.

Whoever desires to perform an apostolate and does not turn to Mary, is like a bird who wants to fly without wings.

Consider Jesus Christ as the Apostle and Pontiff of all Religion. But consider together that every apostolate and every apostle, at all times and in all places, is born in Mary's Heart, is nourished and reared by Mary, operates under Mary's beneficent shadow. Blessed are the fruits of Mary's womb! They are precious, they are many, they are lasting.

With Mary there is everything; without Mary there is nothing.

At the beginning and before all ages Mary existed in the mind of God as an Apostle; "she administered in the holy habitation"; and in the creative plan and in the redemptive design the apostle of mankind was thought of and prepared, the Mother of the Apostle and Pontiff Jesus Christ, the Mother of every apostle, the light, the guide, the help of every apostolate.

CHAPTER XXXI

MARY AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

After the Resurrection Jesus Christ remained forty days on the earth, appearing frequently, conversing with His Disciples to instruct them, to confirm them, to communicate powers and ineffable graces, to perfect His work: especially to give them stability and unity in Peter. "Feed My lambs, feed My sheep...". Lastly He invested them with the same mission fulfilled by Him "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you: go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit". (Matt. 28: 19.) He also gave a command and confirmed a promise: "And I send forth upon you the promise of My Father. But wait here in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high". (Luke 24: 49.) "Then He led them towards Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. And it came to pass as He blessed them, that He parted from them and was carried up into Heaven... and a cloud took Him out of their sight". (Luke 24: 50; Acts 1: 10.)

"Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a

Sabbath day's journey. And when they had entered the city, they mounted to the upper room where were staying Peter and John, James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alpheus, and Simon the Zealot, and Jude the brother of James. All these with one mind continued steadfastly in prayer with the women and Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and with His brethren." (Acts 1: 12-14.)

"And when the days of Pentecost were drawing to a close, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from Heaven, as of a violent wind blowing, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as of fire, which settled upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in foreign tongues, even as the Holy Spirit prompted them to speak." (Acts 2: 1-4.)

In her Conception, Mary's soul had been filled with grace and made most holy for herself as the most sublime Daughter of the Father. In the Annunciation, by the same Holy Spirit, she was filled with grace in order to be a worthy Mother of the Incarnate Word and fulfill this duty worthily. But at Pentecost, still through the work of the Holy Spirit, she was filled with grace in order to be the worthy Mother of the Church, take the Infant

Church in her arms, nourish her, feed her and fortify her with her presence, her example and her prayers. . . . And then? To be, throughout the centuries, for the Church: Mother of Good Counsel, Help of Christians, Cause of our Joy, Queen and Teacher.

In this new descent the Holy Spirit infused: the theological virtues, the cardinal virtues, the seven gifts, the twelve fruits, the religious virtues, the eight beatitudes, a universal charity, a maternal tenderness, a new zeal. The Holy Spirit was irradiated from her Heart.

The scriptural comparisons show a bit of Mary's work.

She is the ark in which all who take refuge are saved.

She is the stair and the door of Heaven: and he who is devoted to Mary quickly rises to sanctity and unites Himself to God.

She is a very powerful army prepared to fight and certain of victory against the demons.

She is the dawn which announces the sun of justice, Jesus Christ.

She is a plantation of roses which gives off the sweetest perfume.

She is the moon who, in the night, dispels the darkness of error and of evil.

According to St. Bernardine of Siena: When God elects a certain person to a duty, He also gives him the necessary gifts and graces. And, briefly, these are: a deeper knowledge of and greater faith in the Church, her office in the world, her powers, her future; hope and charity for all the new children; universal power of intercession. For each new duty, new vocation, there is a new participation of divine goods.

There are three kinds of habitual grace: sanctifying grace **dignificans**, the gift of the Holy Spirit which renders the soul holy, dear to God, child of God by adoption, capable of merit, heir of eternal life. It is that possessed by all Christians who are without sin, the good servants of God, the faithful, worthy followers of Jesus Christ.

Sanctifying grace **deificans**, gift of the Holy Spirit which adds to the above-mentioned goods an infinite value: to **deify** human nature, inasmuch as it is assumed by God in unity of person: to form the God-Man and render man capable of actions of infinite merit. There is only one example: Jesus Christ Who, with His Passion and Death, made satisfaction for us and gave an infinite glory to the Father.

Besides these two there is a third kind of grace, that of Mary Most Holy, sanctifying grace, **deipariens**, proper to the Mother of God. She exceeds the

grace of all the Saints, who are the Servants of God; whereas Mary is the Mother of God. It is one thing to be the subject, another to be the Mother of the King.

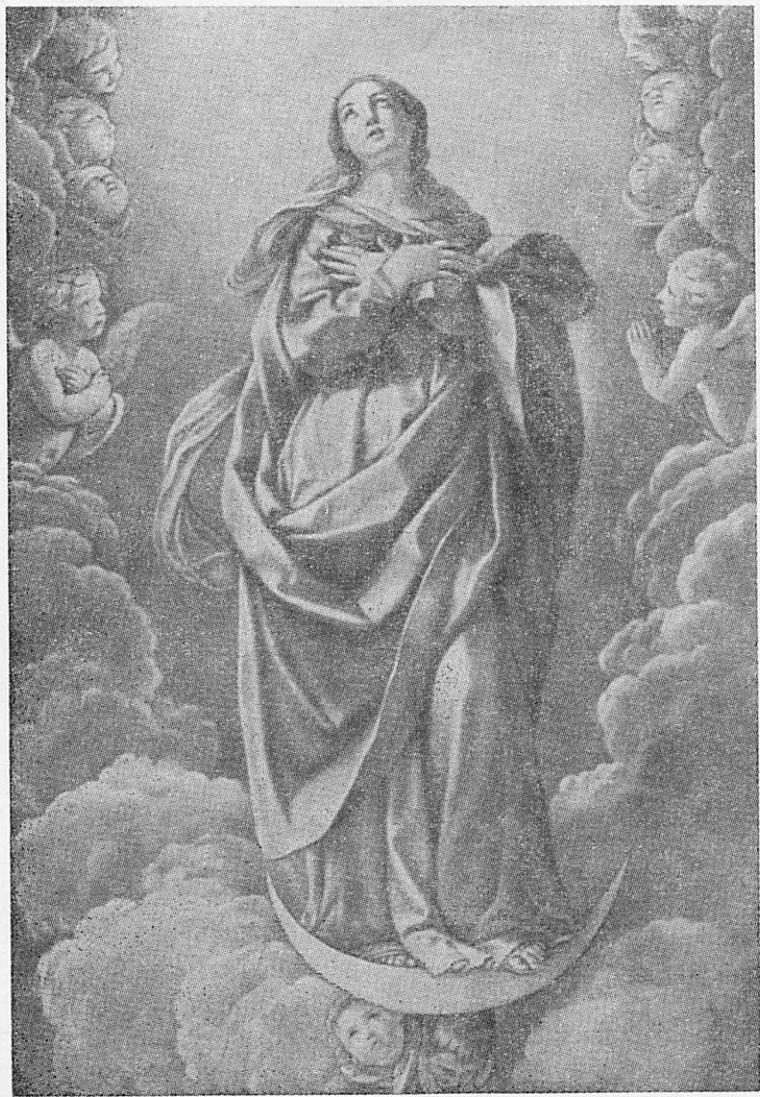
The Virgin, because she is the Mother of God, belongs to the hypostatic order. The true and essential reason of the special devotion of hyperdulia which is given to the Mother of God, is not Mary's great sanctity, but the different sanctity; that is, the divine Maternity, fruit of her different and special sanctity. In Mary is venerated not only the Saint (in the manner in which one says: "such and such is a Saint"); nor is only the Mother of God venerated, but together both the Saint and the Mother of God.

This different and special grace has rendered Mary worthy Mother of Christ, and worthy Mother of mankind, members of Christ.

Mary was full of this grace, that is, she had sufficient and abundant grace to fulfill her duty of Mother of God; and also to fulfill her duty of Mother of mankind: "From the abundance of true plenitude she has emptied and empties into everyone".

At first Mary's life was united to that of Jesus Christ; now it is united to that of His work, the community of the faithful.

From Pentecost, new relations were created between Mary and the Apostles, the Priests, the Bishops and the Popes of all times. Mary is so as-



**"Thou art all fair, O Mary, and
there is in thee no stain of original sin."**

Judith 13.

sociated with the propagation and the life of the Church that the latter may always count on her.

Mary always gives the same counsel to the Ministers of the Church as well as to the individual faithful; the only one that the Gospel records as having issued from her lips, but which is sufficient for life and for the apostolate. She gave it to the servants at the wedding feast at Cana: "Do whatever He tells you".

This new mission of Mary, regarding the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, is indicated in the office of the Queen of the Apostles. "On Pentecost, Mary was filled by the gifts of the Holy Spirit in such a measure as to be able to distribute them in abundance to everyone".

In fact, it is said that Mary was given the fullness of all the gifts which were subdivided among the Apostles.

St. Thomas Aquinas has a profound comment on the "full of grace" of the Hail Mary. He says that the fullness can be considered in three ways: First: full to avoid sin and to practice virtue. Second: full in relation to the office of Mother of Jesus Christ. Third: full in relation to the distribution to be accomplished for all mankind. (S. T. 39, 27, a. 5, ad 1.) Elsewhere he adds that Mary, through her union with God, had such fullness as to be able to share it with the whole world. She has been accomplish-

ing this from the moment that she became the spiritual Mother of all mankind, especially since her glorious Assumption. She is everyone's Mother, but especially of the Apostles.

St. Joseph Cafasso wrote: "In Paradise, Mary is as the Mother of a family. Give me an energetic mother, one well attentive to her house: she alone keeps an eye on everything; no matter how numerous the family is, she thinks of everything; she provides everyone with what is necessary; she does not even wait for one of the children to ask, she thinks of it; in fact, even before a thing becomes necessary, she prepares it so that it will be ready at the opportune moment. Isn't it true that a good mother does this? And this is precisely what Mary does. All of us form a large family of which God is the Head, the Father; the Mother of this great family, then, is Mary Most Holy. God has deposited all graces in her hands; and she, as a good Mother, is always attentive to all our needs. She goes about distributing this grace to one and that to another, according to each one's particular needs: and at times she gives them to us without our asking for them." Mary's intercession is not a prayer in our ordinary meaning; but it is rather the expression of her will.

The Holy Spirit communicates His supernatural life in Baptism: "...unless a man be born

again of water and the Spirit . . .", because "you must be born again".

It is a great thing to give life, but it is greater still to communicate the powers, the zeal, the flame of the apostolate. This flame is communicated in different degrees, in different measures, in different times to the Priest and to the Catholic.

It is communicated to the Priest at Ordination; to the Christian at Confirmation. At Ordination, the Priest receives the power of consecrating, of absolving from sins and of conferring other Sacraments. "Receive the Holy Spirit: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven. . . ."

At Confirmation, the Christian receives the Holy Spirit in order to become a brave soldier for good battles, a man of action who not only believes, but also defends and propagates his faith.

The Holy Spirit is the substantial Love of the Father and of the Son; He is the Sanctifier, the Light, the Joy, the Strength, the Soul of the Church and of every soul. In a visible manner, He showed Himself under the form of a dove and of fire; in an invisible manner, He descends in every soul in grace. "You have been washed, you have been sanctified, you have been justified in the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of Our God". (1 Cor. 6: 11.) And without Him there is neither

life nor merit: "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord', except in the Holy Spirit". (1 Cor. 12: 3.)

The Sacrament of Confirmation is the Sacrament of zeal, of ardor for the glory of God and for the salvation of souls, of the activities of the apostolate.

In Masses assisted at with devotion, in Confessions, in Holy Communions, we always ask Jesus to increase the gifts of the Holy Spirit; that the apostolic zeal may increase in proportion.

The co-operation of the Catholic laity with the hierarchy of the Church was well outlined by Pope Pius XI in many documents, which are synthesized in the letter of Pope Pius XII to Cardinal Piazza (Oct. 11, 1946) on Catholic Action. The Holy Father approves the new statutes and again inculcates principles and activities:

"Thus in fulfilling this Our Act, We are comforted by the thought of being able to worthily recognize the long and arduous efforts of these Catholics who, armed with nothing but a steadfast love of Christ and His Church, gave, lately, a valid contribution to the militia of the Christian name and in such a manner crowned the long standing and wise work of Our Predecessors, who always addressed words of paternal solicitude to Catholic Action, and made of it a strong and faithful instrument for the defense of the Church and the diffu-

sion of her teachings. Likewise hope favors Us that, in so doing, We open to Catholic Action, in the observance of the dispositions of the Concordat which regard it, a new period of fecund activity: having called the Bishops to share with Us the government of this growing army of faithful desirous of spiritual perfection and of social activity; once again entrusted to lay directors, opportunely chosen, precise and responsible executive functions; invited the Clergy to an authoritative and well-distributed mission of spiritual and moral assistance; perfected the directive organs of the various classes of the entire organization; opened the possibility of expansion with the creation of new works and the adherence of new institutions; affirmed as legitimate the existence of other different Catholic associations and promoted among all a solid fraternal collaboration, We trust that there will be established that equilibrium and that vitality which must belong to those movements born from the charity of Christ and the agents in His Church and even today show its perennial fecundity.

“But more than to the letter of the complicated and delicate statutory norms, Our attention is directed to the meaning which the Pontifical sanction, given to such norms assumes, to the new recognition and to the encouragement, that is, of the

collaboration of lay people in the hierarchical apostolate and with that to the warning and the invitation which is directed to all good Catholics, truly conscious of the needs of the times, to give to the profession of their faith an acting and militant spirit. May the Clergy therefore see affirmed in Catholic Action the need, rendered impelling by the conditions of modern life and by the scarcity of Priests, to create among the laity generous collaborators, and a well-tried method offered to proceed to their formation and to their organization; and may the laity see in Catholic Action a stimulus to serve the Church voluntarily, but with discipline, and a high concept of the work which every simple faithful can render to the cause of Christ. And We would also, that the entire people see in Catholic Action not a closed circle of persons initiated to exclusive ideals, or an instrument of sterile battle or ambitious conquests, but rather a friendly army of citizens who have made their own the maternal intention of the Church of redeeming everyone and of guaranteeing to society the unalterable and indispensable leaven of true civilization."

The shepherds were the first members of Catholic Action: they co-operated with the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ. Hearing from the Angel the great announcement of the birth of the Savior, they went to Bethlehem and adored the Infant presented

by Mary. In the meanwhile they related to Mary and Joseph the celestial hymn: "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to men of good will", and how they had had the news of the birth of the Messias. So much so that the Evangelist immediately concludes: "Mary kept in mind all these words, pondering them in her Heart". (Luke 2: 19.) She was instructed and better enlightened by them concerning her Son's mission and concerning the part which awaited her as Coredemptrix. She shared the joy of those simple people and in her Heart she repeated her *Magnificat*. Then when the shepherds returned to their flock and their families, they told everyone of the marvels of that night: of how they had found the Infant and His Mother. They were, so to speak, the first to preach of the Infant and of the Most Blessed Virgin.

God elects the humble: shepherds, fishermen, simple souls for His marvels.

Make the Novena of Pentecost well: with Mary and in Mary.

"Come, Holy Spirit, Light Divine,
From Heaven let upon us shine,
Thy radiance bright.
Come, O Father of the lowly,
Come, Thou of our hearts true Light.

Thou of consolers art the best,
Thou of the soul art sweetest guest,
Thou refreshment sweet.
In labor, Thou art rest,
Solace in life's tempest,
In our grief, our Paraclete.
O most blessed Light, impart
With Thy brightness fill the heart
Of the faithful dear to Thee.
Without Thy grace to guide,
Nothing can in man abide,
Nothing can from stain be free.
Wash away each sordid stain,
Upon the arid soul send forth Thy rain,
Heal our wounds, O God we pray.
Bend Thou the rigid will,
The frozen heart with Thy love fill,
Guide the faltering steps that stray.
Thy sevenfold sacred gifts bestow
Upon Thy faithful who do show
An ever loving trust in Thee.
Do Thou to virtue dedicate
A holy death to all predestinate,
To live in eternal bliss with Thee.
Amen. Alleluia."

On the feast of the Queen of the Apostles, the Church prays: "O God, Who hast sent the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles gathered in prayer together with Mary the Mother of Jesus: grant, we pray, through the intercession of this our Mother and Queen, to faithfully serve Your infinite Majesty and to diffuse, with word and example, the glory of Thy holy Name".

CHAPTER XXXII

MARY, APOSTLE OF CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION

Mary is by nature essentially an Apostle. She came to give Jesus, to bring life to souls, to be the Mediatrix, the Dispenser of grace. Depriving her of this halo, the reason for her existence would cease; this would mean to destroy her. Jesus is an Apostle because: "I came so that they may receive life". Mary came to bring us Life—Christ.

She is an Apostle: in the Prophecies, in life, in Heaven.

To establish the Marian devotion is to place the Virgin in the exercise of her apostolate toward humanity and individuals; toward civil society and toward the Church; in respect to the Kingdom of God and to His glory. Established in a See, Mary accomplishes proportionally and invisibly what took place in France through the apparitions at Lourdes; in Mexico at Guadalupe; in Portugal through the apparitions at Fatima; in Argentina by the Virgin of Lujan and in Brazil by Our Lady Aparecida.

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I intend to recommend a great need of the Church in every Mass to the Divine Master through

the intercession of the Queen of the Apostles: **high religious culture**. The governing classes, the professionalists, the so-called educated persons, today live in a frightful ignorance of the sublimest and most necessary knowledge. In the Concordat between Italy and the Holy See, religious instruction was considered as the basis and the crown of all scholastic instruction. This is giving sacred knowledge its place. In the world in general, however, an abyss has been dug between reason and faith; between Christian doctrine and civil culture. It is often verified that the very one who has progressed more in letters and in sciences, lacks knowledge of the most elementary truths: they are supinely ignorant of the most vital problems. O foolish men, who act as teachers in many good things; you study so much for a life which at the most can last one hundred years; and for it you do not spare time nor effort; whereas for a life which will never end (it will not last for only one hundred billion centuries!) you do not even spend five minutes of your day. Yet divine knowledge is the most worthy of man, it is the indispensable science, the greatest wealth.

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It would be a great apostolate to evangelize these classes; but the efforts almost always clash against the insurmountable barriers of human pride;

puffed up with their learning, they despise the humble though most sublime Christian doctrine. There is, however, a way which can lead to a good end: Mary.

The mistakes of the intellectuals, of philosophers, of sociologists, of the learned depend upon their having abandoned the way of truth: Jesus Christ is the truth; the way to Jesus Christ is Mary. Mary is the Seat of Wisdom: and do we expect to find wisdom where it is not? Mary is the Mother of Good Counsel: and do we expect to be guided by a blind person? Mary is she: "from whom the light came forth". She is not the light, but the dawn that brings it; she is the moon that reflects the light. However, we have many philosophers, sociologists, learned men, intellectuals, who are devoted admirers, children of Mary: they have created the perennial philosophy, Christian sociology, a formative literature, an elevated and profound intellectualism. Because a superficial knowledge leads one away from God, while a profound knowledge draws one nearer to God; because God is wisdom itself.

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Mary is the Mother of true culture. True culture for a people results from four elements of which three are substantial: truth, good customs, and Christian worship; and the fourth is complementary: an elevated tenor of human life insofar as it is tolerable.

Now, from Mary we receive the Truth—Christ; from Mary we receive every virtue; from Mary we receive the most sublime piety; from Mary we receive the example of a simple but well-ordered, serene life.

The devotion to Mary, liturgical or popular, collective or individual, ordinarily precedes or accompanies the march of the Church and of Jesus Christ: It is universal among all peoples.

If, from literature, prose or poetry, all that which regards Mary were removed, if that which regards Mary were removed from all painting, sculpture, music and architecture . . . if, from the Christian cult and piety all that which is Marian liturgy, devotion and institutions were removed . . . what would follow? What a weakening! If Mary is removed, the world becomes obscure, a frost would invade everything; it would be like removing the Mother of a family from a home where the husband and the nestful of children consider her the heart of the home.

Mary elevates customs. Man is very much inclined towards the earth: he always has need of someone who will elevate his mind and his heart toward Heaven. To point to Mary is to indicate the end: "See what you were created for, where you must arrive and which is the road you must take. Mary is: Queen of Heaven, Gate of Heaven, Queen

of Angels, Queen of All Saints. Herein lies all the wisdom from which every good proceeds: to direct our life toward Paradise. Herein lies the moralization and elevation of private and public custom.

Mary, then, is a model who can easily be imitated by everyone. God's sanctity shines forth in Jesus Christ, human-divine model: He is eternal Beauty clothed in a form similar to ours. (Phil. 2: 7.) But the Virgin is an entirely human model elevated by grace: hence within our reach. She is pure, strong, patient and benign.

Mary pacifies hearts. Before this Virgin the Barbarians lowered their swords, set aside their ferocious spirit and ceased seeking revenge. Mary conquered arrogance with her sweetness.

Mary was the life of the Church. Nicolas says: "The Marian devotion is the continuation of the Council of Ephesus", that is, it is Christianity, in which the true maternity of Mary, and the divinity and truth of Christ mutually illuminate each other, complete one another to overcome evil and establish Christian life.

This Mother always generates new children to the Church. St. Cyril of Alexandria, at the close of the Council of Ephesus, thus spoke to Mary: "Hail, O Mother of God, through whose work the churches were established in the cities and villages

and islands of the orthodox". Believers, parishes, Religious Institutions are all children of Mary. The Most Holy Virgin continually works for the Kingdom of Jesus and for the Church. All Mary's power is in favor of the Church.

Mary is the Mother of Religious. The Religious Orders and Congregations are the most elevated and perfect form of life in the Church. They exercise a powerful influence on the Church. In the history of culture they are intellectually, morally and materially the highest factors. In the Marian devotion they were inspired by the life and the spirit of the Virgin; and they give to Marian piety the strongest contribution of irradiation. The religious life is constituted by the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience in the regular observance: Mary is the model. The religious life applies itself to contemplation, manual labor, to the apostolate and in the defense of Catholicism. In Mary is found the type of these four forms of activity.

Mary is the teacher and vigor of Religious families. Only with Mary can a founder conceive and begin an institution; such a quantity of grace is necessary that only in her can it be hoped that what in itself is arduous and difficult may be easy. The Carthusians and Cistercians attribute their birth to Mary. The Mercedarians, the Carmelites, the Ser-

vites declare themselves founded directly by Mary. The Dominicans, Franciscans, Jesuits, Salesians, Marists, Christian Brothers, Lazzarists, Redemptorists, Paulines and all the feminine Religious Institutions, have their life, ministry, apostolate and works so tied up in Mary that, it may be said: "Their progress proceeds according to their Marian piety".

Mary is the Mother of Charitable Institutions. These are carried out in great part by Religious Orders and Congregations, always united to Mary. The modern Missionary Institutions, the most fecund and modern apostolates, works of a social nature; then the beneficent works of the Camillians, Trinitarians, Lazzarists, Augustinians, Jesuits, Passionists, and so on; the immense work of the Sisters in all the branches of beneficence: are all an immense flowering which recognizes in Mary the celestial Gardener, the Inspirer, Helper. If these works were to be taken away from humanity, we would have to think of the fate of the poor, of the orphans, of the aged and of youth in the ancient Roman empire or among the pagan people of today. Nicolas writes: Mary is the vital knot of each and every work, being herself the Workwoman par excellence of grace, Workwoman from whom the very Workman willed to be formed". All is from Mary, through Mary, with Mary, if one wants it to be vital and operative. The immense scale of the works of

charity testifies to the spirit of Jesus Christ and exalts the Most Holy Virgin, the stairway which leads to God.

Mary, Mother of Catholic Action. This honors Mary, Queen of Apostles. Her duty is to co-operate with the Catholic hierarchy. This end is the noblest and closest to the Catholic Priesthood. The means are: religious instruction; moralizing work; organization of youth, of women, of men for a greater defense of their Faith; necessary initiatives which are useful today: press, missions, motion pictures, workers' leagues, beneficence, etc. Mary is Queen. It consists in co-operating in the restoration of everything in Christ and in the Church. Mary is the Mirror of justice.

Mary is Queen of the people: St. Bernardine writes: "All those who serve the Most Blessed Trinity serve Mary". Kingdoms and cities, armies and great civil enterprises have been consecrated to Mary. Blessed are they who live under her mantle! Spain, Portugal, Argentina, Brazil, France, Hungary, etc., particularly honor Mary. Italy is, in a special way, Mary's nation; her sanctuaries, numerous and rich with piety and art, bespeak it. France has thirty Cathedrals consecrated to Mary.

Mary is Queen of art. Architecture has paid homage to Mary with Sanctuaries which are a

marvel, such as St. Mary Major in Rome; the Duomo of Milan, dedicated to the Infant Mary. Painting has paid homage to Mary with the most beautiful paintings as, for example, those of Fra Angelico. Sculpture has paid homage with the most beautiful statues, such as that of the Pieta. Poetry and music have paid homage through the greatest poets and the best musicians. Mary is the ideal subject which every artist wishes to treat. And in this way Mary Most Holy exercises on the population a powerful fascination through her sweetness and mercy. Truly was it predicted of Mary: "All generations will call you blessed".

It is well to conclude with the words of St. Germain: "Who will not be taken up with admiration for you, O immutable hope, certain refuge, vigilant supPLICATOR, perennial salvation, Mother of the Lamb and of the Shepherd, procurer of every good. . . . Be you therefore blessed by all generations. There is no place, O Mary, where you are not honored. . . ; and even the nations that did not want to recognize you, will one day be forced to honor you, when your Son will come to judge all creatures; and you will be recognized as His true Mother. Then with tears they will confess their culpable blindness, in depriving themselves of the treasures which you scatter to your children. To us, who with firm faith confess you to be the Moth-

er of our God and venerate you as such, deign to continue your beneficent patronage”.

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Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of mercy, hail our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve! To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears! Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus! O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!

CHAPTER XXXIII

CONCLUSION

In the Litany, Mary is called **Queen of Angels**, because her intelligence is superior to that of everyone; **Queen of Patriarchs**, because her piety is superior to that of everyone. She is called **Queen of Prophets** because of her sublime gift of prophecy; **Queen of Apostles**, because of her most ardent zeal. She is called **Queen of Martyrs** because she surpasses them all in fortitude; **Queen of Confessors** because she surpasses them all in virtue; **Queen of Virgins** because she surpasses them all in purity. She is called **Queen of all Saints** because she had greater sanctity and fullness of grace and glory in respect to them. It is a primacy of greatness and of perfection that Mary has in respect to each Saint, to each category of Saints and to all the Saints together.

The reason for this is her Divine Maternity. Because she is the Mother of God she has a union, a special relationship with God. She is the blessed among women; she is in a unique position, the highest; she is more connected with God. "The more

man is united to God, the holier he is," says St. Thomas. Mary, Mother of God, therefore exceeds every apostolate.

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The duty of Queen.—In order to understand how her power of Queen is verified in her it is necessary to think of her mission. She is the "Co-adjutor, Companion and Participant of the celestial Kingdom because she was Jesus' companion in His sufferings for the salvation of mankind". (St. Albert the Great.) Jesus is King because by dying He conquered mankind; Mary is companion of the Kingdom because, by accompanying Jesus in His Passion, with Him and through Him she also conquered them.

Now Jesus Christ the King does nothing independently of Mary the Queen. In this manner the Blessed Virgin becomes in some measure, participant, in practice, of the three royal powers of Jesus Christ: legislative, judicial and executive; which, in themselves, should belong only to the King. Thus it is that Jesus Christ establishes laws, and through His own authority commands that they be observed; but the Virgin gives her consent and in confirming them she admonishes us maternally: "Do whatever Jesus tells you". (John 2: 5.) And so by obeying Mary, as Mother and Queen, the apostle truly obeys

Jesus. It is that which happens in a family when the mother makes her own, and inculcates in her son, the command given by the father as the head of the house.

Through His authority and power, Jesus Christ judges and pronounces the sentence. However, if it is a sentence of mercy, as happens when the reward is given to the apostle, it is pronounced with Mary's merciful intervention; in fact it is given precisely because of Mary's intervention. If, instead, the sentence is one of punishment, Mary consents, because such is the divine will.

Also: In His power Jesus Christ carries out the sentence pronounced through His authority; but even here there is Mary's consent. In fact, there is a direct intervention when Jesus Christ crowns the apostle. Thus Mary, in her own way, participates in the Kingdom as she participated in its conquest.

The filial slavery or perfect servitude to Mary taught by St. Grignon de Montfort is founded on this doctrine.

Moreover: Mary has an honor and a power over the apostles insofar as she is the Mother of Jesus Christ the King, and Spouse of the Holy Spirit. The glory of the Son is reflected in His Mother; just as on the other hand the Son's sorrows are reflected on Mary. The life, the infallibility, the indefectibility that the Holy Spirit communicates to

the Church pass through Mary's hands. The more so in that she works with Jesus Christ and with the Holy Spirit over every soul in grace.

All receive from Mary; the plans of Jesus Christ concerning each one of us are also the desires and plans of Mary Most Holy.

Mary is most powerful in interceding for all the Saints. And her intercession is "a supplicating omnipotence". She is immensely superior to all the Saints: for her dignity, for her universality, for her necessity, for her way of praying; because for Mary there are laws of love and predilection which are exceptional and all her own.

The rights to the title of Queen are:

Mary is the Mother of God and our Mother;

Mary is the Coredemptrix and Mediatrix of graces;

Mary is the Spouse of the Holy Spirit;

In Heaven, Mary was crowned Queen by the Most Blessed Trinity;

Mary is of the royal family of David;

Mary was made to share in His Kingdom by Jesus Christ;

Mary is elected Queen of the Church by the souls.

However, these various titles reduce themselves essentially to two: She is the Mother of Jesus Christ; she co-operated in the Redemption.

Hence the learned Suarez says: "The Blessed Virgin, **for the fact that she is the Mother of God**, has a certain right to the dominion over all creatures. . . . Furthermore: she possesses another title of this dominion having co-operated in a very singular manner in the redemption of mankind". The Blessed Virgin, as Mother of Jesus Christ, is Queen therefore, **for that which she is** (native right) in as much as she is the Mother of God; and **for that which she did** (acquired right) being the Core-demptrix.

First title.—Divine Maternity: "The Mother of the King is naturally Queen". (St. Albert the Great.) In fact, Mary conceived her son as He is: that is, God and King. The Angel Gabriel willed that Mary be well acquainted with these titles of the Son Who was to be born of her and that she give explicit consent to become the Mother of God and of the King: . . . "The Lord God will give Him the throne of David His father, and He shall be king over the house of Jacob forever". (Luke 1: 32.) And so Mary acquired a joint dominion over all the creation and over all the goods that are distributed to mankind. The Holy Fathers call Mary: "Queen of the human race, Queen of our health, Lady, Queen of the universe, Queen of Heaven", etc.

Pope St. Pius X says: "Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of the Father, Mary sits at the right hand of her Son".

Pope Leo XIII writes: "Mary was adorned with a crown of stars by her Son-God; and sits near Him as Queen and Lady of the universe".

Second title.—Mary's co-operation was a great work of redemption. In regards to this Suarez writes: "Jesus Christ is our King and Lord because He reconquered us, by triumphing over Satan the tyrant; so Mary, for the ineffable manner in which she co-operated in our salvation by providing her Son with flesh and blood, and by voluntarily offering Him on Calvary for us, by desiring, asking, procuring our salvation, became our Queen. She co-operated in paying the price of our ransom". These words correspond to St. Albert the Great's sentence: "Only Mary is a companion to the throne, because she was a companion in sorrow".

Under another aspect, it may also be added that Mary is the **Spouse of Christ**; in this sense that, with Him, she has regenerated us to a supernatural life. Now it is clear that between the Spouse and His Bride there is a communion of goods. Among the goods of Jesus Christ there is Christ's royalty in which Mary participates; hence to her also God has given a name, a power, a sovereign dignity over all creatures.

In St. John Chrysostom's liturgy is said: "Mary is our Queen, Princess and Lady of all creation, our Lady, sure Propitiation and firm Defence, Fount

of grace and Refuge of the world". Elsewhere: "Guard your servants, O Lady and Hope of the world".

Consequently we must be servants and apostles of Mary.

Servants of Mary, Queen of Apostles: "You must serve the Mother of God in life, if you want to live with Mary in her kingdom after death." (Richard of St. Laurence.) To accomplish Mary's will in order to more perfectly accomplish the will of God are not two, but one will.

St. Ildephonsus thus speaks of Mary: "How ardently I desire to become the servant of this Lady! How much I desire to serve her faithfully; how much I want my service to be pleasing to her . . . in order to merit her graces and to continue my service to her in Heaven." We have an excellent explanation of this perfect servitude in the precious works of St. Grignon de Montfort.

Apostles of Mary

a) To make Mary known by word of mouth and with writings. In Sermons, Catechisms, conversations, letters, leaflets, writings, motion pictures and the radio . . . enough is never said about Mary.

b) To inculcate imitation of and filial servitude to Mary; illustrate her virtues, explain the life of union with Mary; give the example of love and true devotion to Mary.

c) To diffuse prayers and devotion to Mary so that everyone may invoke her as Mother, Model, Mediatrix of grace. In all circumstances of life, in every undertaking, in every temptation, let her be especially invoked by the infirm as the Consoler of the afflicted, as the Refuge of sinners, as Gate of Heaven, as Health of the sick.

Let us recite the Hail Holy Queen always and everywhere.

Mary will bless the apostle. And together with her Son she will crown him in the glory of Heaven.

In the Church of St. Apollinarius in Rome, an ancient and miraculous image of Our Lady Queen of Apostles is venerated. The Virgin is represented seated on the throne while she shows the Infant Jesus to the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul.

The following works for Sacerdotal vocations were placed under the protection of the Queen of the Apostles:

At Rome in the Palace of the Vicariate;

At Mondovi through the initiative of His Excellency Bishop Ressa;

At Volterra through the initiative of His Excellency Bishop Munerati;

At Bologna through the initiative of His Eminence Cardinal Nasalli-Rocca.

At Milan the work of His Eminence Cardinal Ferrari;

In twenty-four nations, the Pious Society of St. Paul and the Daughters of St. Paul, who have the apostolate of the press, radio, motion pictures and television, and are Institutes of Pontifical Right.

The invocation "Queen of the Apostles" is enriched with a 300 days indulgence.

In Brazil there are chapels, Associations, Pious Unions in honor of the "Queen of the Apostles" promoted by Bishops and by the Pallotine Fathers.

The Venerable Vincent Palloti, called "The Apostle of Rome" founded, in 1835, the Pious Society of the **Catholic Apostolate** with the scope of reviving Christian faith and charity among the faithful, and enkindle it among pagans and heretics. It comprises Priests, Sisters and laity. The Congregation of the Pallotine Fathers, known under the name of Pious Society of the Missions, has two thousand members among Professed and Novices.

In Bavaria Father Kronscher, S.J., founded a Marian association entitled "The Queen of the Apostles" for the students of Monaco.

A Congregation of Missionary Sisters, with Motherhouse at Vinissieux (France), was instituted under this title of the Most Holy Virgin.

Pope Pius XI, the great Pope of the Missions, explained the title Queen of Apostles several times. At the Missionary exposition of 1931 a beautiful painting representing the Queen of Apostles was

admired: at Mary's feet was St. Paul who indicated to an interminable number of Missionaries to turn to Mary.

In his Encyclical on the Missions, Pope Pius XI places the great apostolic work in the hands of the Queen of the Apostles. He says: "The Queen of the Apostles, Mary, smiles with maternal love upon our common desires, having gathered in her heart of Mother mankind entrusted to her by her Son Jesus on Calvary, loves and protects not only those who are ignorant of having been redeemed by Jesus Christ, but also those who already happily enjoy the fruits of this redemption".

"August Lady of Heaven and Queen of Apostles, always pray for us so that all peoples may know that the Lord is the true God; and there is no other but Him. Gather us, O Mother and Queen; pray to your Son, the Lord of the harvest that He may send laborers into His vineyard." (From the Liturgical Office of the Queen of Apostles.)

Chaplet to Mary, Queen of the Apostles

V) *Incline unto my aid, O God.*

R) *O Lord make haste to help me.*

1. — Most amiable Queen of Heaven and of earth, beloved Daughter of the Father, sublime Mother of the Divine Son, illustrious Spouse of the Holy Spirit, I venerate and praise that sole privilege in the world, whereby pleasing God in thy humility and conserving thy spotless virginity, thou didst become the great Mother of the Divine Savior, our Master, true Light of the world, uncreated Wisdom, source of all truths and first Apostle of Truth. For the ineffable joy which thou didst feel and for that sublime privilege, I bless the August Trinity and I pray thee to obtain for me the grace of heavenly wisdom, to be a humble and fervent disciple of Jesus, a devoted child of the Church, a pillar of truth. Make the light of the Gospel shine upon the bounds of the world, overcome errors, gather all men round the See of Peter. Enlighten doctors, preachers and writers, O Mother of Good Counsel, O Seat of Wisdom, O Queen of Saints. *Hail Mary, Queen of the Apostles, pray for us.*

2. — O Mary, Queen of all the Angels, full of grace, conceived without sin, blessed among creatures, living tabernacle of God, remember the painful and solemn moment in which thy dying Jesus from the Cross gave thee John as thy son, and in him all men and especially all the Apostles. What a tender love overflowed thy heart at that moment for souls consecrated to the Apostolate, to the following of the Cross, to the love of Jesus. For thine ineffable sufferings and those of thy Divine Son, for thy motherly heart, O Mary, increase the glorious phalanx of Apostles, of Missionaries, of Priests, of Virgins. May these souls shine for sanctity of life, integrity of morals, solid piety, profound humility, firm faith, and most ardent charity. May they all be saints and purifying salt of the earth, O Teacher of the Saints, O Mother of the Great High Priest and thyself Victim and Altar. *Hail Mary, Queen of the Apostles, etc.*

3. — O Virgin most pure, august Queen of Martyrs, Morning Star, secure refuge of sinners, rejoice for the days in which thou wast Teacher, Comforter and Mother of the Apostles in the Cenacle, to invoke and receive the Divine Paraclete, the Spirit with the seven gifts, Love of the Father and of the Son, transformer of the Apostles. By thy omnipotent supplications, and by thy humble and irresistible prayers which always move God's Heart, obtain for me the grace to understand the value of the souls which Jesus Christ ransomed from hell with His Most Precious Blood. May each one of us be filled with zeal for the beauty of the Christian Apostolate; may the charity of Christ urge us on; may the spiritual misery of poor mankind move us. Grant that we may feel in our heart the needs of childhood, of adolescence, of manhood, of old age; that dark Africa, vast Asia, promising Oceania, laboured Europe, the two Americas may exercise a

powerful spell on our souls; that the apostolate of example and of word, of prayer and of the press, of the movies and of the radio, of the souls in purgatory, may conquer many generous souls, even to the point of the most painful sacrifices. O Queen of the Apostles, O Mother of mercy, our Advocate, to thee we sigh, mourning in this valley of tears. *Hail Mary, Queen of the Apostles, etc.*

4. — O our most tender Mother Mary, Gate of Heaven, fountain of peace and happiness, help of Christians, trust of the dying and hope of sinners, I recall the blessed moment for thee in which thou didst leave the earth to fly to the loving embrace of Jesus. It was in an act of supreme love that thy soul did break the bonds of the body, it was the omnipotent predilection of God which raised thee, and beautiful and immortal assumed thee into Heaven. I see thee crowned with a triple crown among the Saints, the Confessors and Virgins, the Apostles and Martyrs, the Prophets and Patriarchs, and even I, from the mire of my faults, dare to unite the voice of an unworthy but penitent sinner to bless and praise thee. O Mary, convert me once and for all. Give me a penitent life, so that I may have a holy death and may one day raise my voice with that of the Saints to praise thee in Paradise. I consecrate myself to thee and through thee to Jesus; I renew, here today, conscious of and in the presence of all the heavenly court, the promises made in Holy Baptism. I renew the resolution which I place in thy Heart, to fight against my pride and to combat unceasingly my predominating fault, which has often cast me into sin. O Mary, gain for thyself the greatest glory, change a great sinner into a great saint, O Refuge of sinners, O Morning Star, O comforter of the afflicted. *Hail Mary, Queen of the Apostles, etc.*

5. — O Mary, Star of the sea, my sweet sovereign, our life and Queen of peace, how great and how sweet was the day on which the August Trinity crowned thee Queen of Heaven and earth, dispenser of all graces, our most amiable Mother: what triumph for us! What happiness for the Angels, for the Saints, for the earth, for Purgatory! I know, O Mary, that he who loves thee will be saved and that he who loves thee greatly will be a saint and will participate one day in thy triumph in Heaven. I do not doubt thy clemency, nor thy power; I fear my inconstancy in praying to thee. Obtain for me perseverance: O Mary, be my salvation. I feel my passions, the devil, the world. O Mary, keep me close to thee and to thy Jesus! Do not let me fall, do not abandon me for an instant, O Mother. It is sweet to turn the first look upon thee in the morning, to walk beneath thy mantle during the day, to fall asleep under thy gaze at night. Thou hast smiles for innocent children, strength for militant youth, light for laboring manhood, comfort for old age which awaits Heaven. O Mary, to thee I consecrate my whole life: pray for me now and at the hour of my death. Receive my soul when it breathes its last and do not leave me until I may prostrate myself at thy throne in Heaven, to love thee for all eternity. O Mary, my Queen, my Advocate, my Sweetness, obtain for me holy perseverance. *Hail Mary, Queen of the Apostles, etc.*

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